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GUERRILLA WARFARE
AND IDEOLOGICAL CONFRONTATION
IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA:
THE REBELLION IN DHUFAR

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One of the enduring factors in Arab politics during the post-World War II era has been the ideological confrontation between “traditional” and “progressive” regimes, between the monarchies and emirates on one hand, and the frequently revolutionary and socialist republics on the other. The impact on the Arabian Peninsula from the rivalry engendered by this schism was relatively late in appearing. Nevertheless, confrontation in the Peninsula resulted in widespread propaganda and open warfare by the 1960s, notably in the course of the six-year-long civil war in Yemen. Even before this conflict came to an end, however, another battleground was emerging in Dhufar, the southern province of the Sultanate of Oman.

Although the rebellion in Dhufar began as a tribal insurrection against a reactionary and paternalistic Sultan, it soon resulted in an ideological—as well as military—struggle between leftist guerrillas and an autocratic government. The rebellion also exacerbated relations between Oman and its fellow conservative regimes in the area, and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) along with its supporters. Eventually, what began as a localized conflict also came to exhibit overtones of Great Power rivalry, with members of both blocs extending logistical and moral support to their respective proxies. Oman’s strategic location at the entrance of the Persian Gulf combined with varying degrees of outside involvement in the conflagration to focus attention on Dhufar as a political problem affecting the security and stability of the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf region.¹

Background

In many ways, Dhufar resembles an island. It is bordered by the Arabian Sea to the south and east and by wide, sandy deserts to the north. These deserts form a physical barrier between Dhufar and the rest of Oman, lying several hundred miles to the northeast. Although the nearby Mahrā and Hadramawt regions of PDRY form a natural

continuation to the west, the rough terrain of western Dhufar has prevented any substantial ties to these areas and has afforded ideal guerrilla territory. The province is divided into three distinct zones: Ṣalālah Plain, facing the Arabian Sea and about thirty miles long and ten miles wide; a series of three mountain ranges, the Jabal Samhān in the east, the Jabal Qarā in the center, and the Jabal Qamar in the west, which form a crescent around the Plain; and the Najd, a stony plateau lying behind the mountains and separating them from the sands of the Rub'al-Khālī desert.

Dhufar is sparsely populated with the total number of inhabitants estimated at 60,000; by the mid-1970s, roughly half of these had gravitated to the provincial capital at Ṣalālah. The rest were either residents of a few coastal towns, principally Mirbāt, Ṭaqah, Raysūt and Rakhyūt, or herdsmen in the mountains and Najd. The majority of the inhabitants of Ṣalālah Plain and the Najd are Arabs of the widespread Kathir tribe. The population of the mountains and eastern plain, however, is largely derived from several intertwined ethnic groups, commonly referred to as *jibālīs* (mountain people) and thought to be descended from ancient South Arabian blood-stocks. These are the Qarā, the Mahrā and the Sherā.²

Traditionally, Dhufar has been separate from Oman with the first modern connection being its annexation by the Sultanate in 1829 following the death of the local ruler. However, the Sultanate's control was extremely loose and during the period 1829-1879, each village was generally independent in internal affairs. In 1879, an Omani expedition successfully retook Ṣalālah and the province has, with a few brief exceptions, remained under Sultanate control ever since.

Fayṣal bin Turkī (r. 1888-1913) was the first Sultan of Oman to visit Dhufar, in order to enjoy its mild climate, and his son, Taymūr (r. 1913-1931), spent more time in Ṣalālah than in the Sultanate's capital in the north, Muscat. Nevertheless, it was Sa'id bin Taymūr (r. 1932-1970) who was responsible for extending the Sultanate's authority throughout Ṣalālah Plain and into the mountains. As early as 1935, he had improved the palace at al-Ḥuṣn, between the old town of Ṣalālah and the beach, and built up agricultural estates at Arzāt and Jarzayz. The Sultan spent much of the World War II period there and was a frequent visitor between 1945 and 1955. He finally made Ṣalālah his permanent residence in 1958 and never returned to Muscat.

But his attitude in treating Dhufar as a private fiefdom was clearly unsuited to the twentieth century. Petty restrictions on the population aroused resentment and many Dhufaris left clandestinely for jobs in the Gulf. The Sultan's refusal to acknowledge Dhufari grievances and his angry reactions to the first expressions of discontent began the cycle of violence that ended in open revolt.

The Beginnings of Revolt

Dissatisfaction with Sa'id's paternalistic rule began to assert itself in the late 1950s. In 1962, one Bayt Kathīrī, Musallam bin Nawful, left Ṣalālah for al-Dammām in Saudi Arabia. There he met the leaders of the old Imamate rebellion which had taken place

in northern Oman in the 1950s.³ Subsequently, a training base was established in al-Başrah, Iraq, and a series of minor raids were carried out against oil company installations in Dhufar during 1963 and 1964.⁴

A more organized approach to dissidence was begun when other Dhufaris in the Gulf came under the influence of George Ḥabash and the Arab Nationalists' Movement (ANM). Some of these were sent to Damascus for political education and training, and on their return to Dhufar *ca.* 1960, they established a local branch of the ANM.⁵ After differences appeared in 1962 between the ANM leadership in the Levant and the Dhufari branch, a number of Dhufari members split away to form the Dhufar Benevolent Society (DBS).⁶

Both the ANM's Dhufar branch and the DBS, with their membership concentrated in Ṣalālah, remained underground until 1964 when plans were made to escalate into direct confrontation. At that time, the merger of ANMS, DBS and a smaller group, the Dhufari Soldiers' Organization, resulted in the Dhufar Liberation Front (DLF).⁷ In early 1965, the ANM's Iraqi and Kuwayti branches dispatched a shipload of men and arms to Dhufar. The boat was intercepted by the Iranian navy, however, and subsequent interrogation led to the capture of a number of dissidents in Muscat and Ṣalālah.

The newly-created DLF held its first conference in the Wādī al-Kabīr of central Dhufar between June 1 and 9, 1965. An eighteen-man Central Committee was elected to lead the organization of approximately 200 members and the decision was made to initiate armed struggle immediately.⁸ Apparently on the same day as the conclusion of the conference, an attack was launched against a government patrol near Thamarīṭ, on the Najd, and so the revolution "officially" began. In the next few years, the scope of the revolt was largely limited to small-scale ambushes of the Sultan's Dhofar Force in the valleys of central Dhufar. Attempts were also made to gain a foothold in the coastal towns, notably Mirbāṭ. However, the rebels' most notable exploit was the near successful assassination attempt on Sa'īd bin Taymūr on April 26, 1966.⁹

The rebellion's successes were few in the first several years, essentially because of the precarious nature of the DLF's outside support. Initial Saudi backing waned as the extremist voices in the Front came to the fore, while Jamāl 'Abd al-Nāṣir's (Nasser) setbacks in Yemen, in the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967, and in the struggle to succeed the British in Aden caused Egypt to restrict its activity in the Peninsula. But at the same time, radical elements in the guerrilla organization were strengthened by the success of the National Liberation Front (NLF) in neighboring Southern Yemen.¹⁰ With the independence of Southern Yemen from the British, a DLF office was established in Aden and the rebels gained the use of Southern Yemeni territory as shelter from the Sultan's reprisals.

The movement's second congress was held at Wādī Hamrīn in central Dhufar between September 1 and 20, 1968. At this meeting, the uneasy balance between the nationalist and radical camps was tipped in favor of the latter. As a result, only three of the eighteen original members of the Central Committee were re-elected and most of the new ones were radicals. Decision-making was shifted to a new twenty-five-

member General Command with Muhammad bin Aḥmad al-Ghassānī as secretary. The organization's leftward tilt was illustrated by the three resolutions accepted at Ḥamrīn:

- (1) To adopt "organized revolutionary violence,"
- (2) To change the DLF's name to Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf,
- (3) To extend the scope of the revolution from Dhufar to Oman and the amirates of the Gulf. In this regard, representatives from various Gulf states were present.¹¹

The establishment of the Aden office soon afterwards cemented strong relations between PFLOAG and the revolutionary regime in Southern Yemen. Ties were also forged at this time with China, Iraq and radical Palestinian organizations such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP).

With new sources of support assured, the guerrilla campaign was stepped up. Gradually PFLOAG was able to extend its territorial control throughout the western part of Dhufar. Positions along the Thamarīṭ road were attacked in early May 1969, and finally Rakhyūt, the major town in the west, was overrun in August 1969.¹² The rebels sought to reinforce their control over the "liberated" areas by forced collectivization of land, political indoctrination in Marxist-Leninist dogma, and strengthened ties with the PDRY hinterland, as evidenced by the beginning of a road from Hawf, in PDRY, to Rakhyūt.¹³

The rest of 1969 and early 1970 saw the extension of the fighting to Thamarīṭ road (code-named "Red Line" by the rebels) and Ṣalālah Plain, including mortar attacks on British-operated Ṣalālah Air Base. The Jabal Samhān region of eastern Dhufar gradually slipped under guerrilla control, and there were attacks on coastal towns during early 1970. Effective government authority by this time was limited to Ṣalālah Plain, where barbed-wire perimeter fences were built around the few remaining coastal towns under Sultanate authority, and the desert behind the mountains.

The success enjoyed by PFLOAG encouraged similar groups in northern Oman. One of these was the Popular Revolutionary Movement of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, an offshoot of the ANM and linked to the Ba'thist regime in Iraq. In June 1970, it merged with several other rudimentary groups, including the Revolutionary Vanguard of the Students of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, the Organization of National Soldiers of Oman, and a "front" of tribal elements. This new formation became known as the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (NDFLOAG); it was to serve as a bridge between the revolutionary movement in Dhufar and embryonic underground forces in the Gulf.¹⁴ NDFLOAG's mortar attacks launched on army camps in northern Oman at Nizwā and Izki on June 12, 1970 were military failures, leading to a number of arrests of NDFLOAG members, but they resulted in a decision for quick action on the part of the various groups plotting the overthrow of Sultan Sa'īd bin Taymūr.

Coup d'Etat and Response

After a brief gun battle in his Ṣalālah palace a month later, Sultan Sa'īd was persuaded to abdicate and leave the country.¹⁵ As the new Sultan, Qābūs bin Sa'īd promised a complete change from the policies employed by his father. In Dhufar, his approach to the insurrection involved a "carrot and stick" method of attempting to undo the damage caused by Sa'īd's petty restrictions on the population while simultaneously engaging in a heavy military build-up to reverse the tide of battle. The new Sultan's concern for Dhufar ran deep: his mother was of Qarā origin and he, himself was born and raised in Dhufar. Consequently, one of the Sultan's first acts was to issue a pardon for surrendering rebels, which attracted many of the "tribal" or "nationalist" rebels but was spurned by the "ideologues." The "carrot" included free access for tribesmen to Ṣalālah, which had been denied them by Sa'īd, as well as the establishment of schools, health facilities, and water distribution schemes. This program was administered in the mountains by Civil Action Teams (CAT), and on Ṣalālah Plain, it was under the aegis of the new Dhofar Development Department (DDD), since disbanded.¹⁶

At the same time, the Sultanate made use of its financial reserves, which had been steadily accumulating since the beginning of oil exports in 1968, to launch a sustained military offensive. Defense expenditure quickly rose to nearly 50% of the national budget as investments were made in British fighters, transport planes, and naval patrol craft, American helicopters and other armaments. The Sultan's Armed Forces were overhauled and enlarged. This expansion was in addition to the regular rotation of other SAF units on combat tours in the south. The rapid expansion of SAF troops meant that its hitherto predominantly Baluchi composition was reversed by the increase in Omani Arab enlistments.¹⁷ The state's administrative growth was strengthened when the Sultanate sought closer ties with other Arab and non-Arab states, resulting in moral, financial, and military support for the government's efforts. The gauntlet thrown down by the revolutionary movement had quite obviously been taken up.

The first chink in the PFLOAG armor appeared in September, when the Bayt Ma'ashānī clan of the Qarā tribe arrested some forty rebels operating in their territory. By October, PFLOAG guerrillas had secured the release of their comrades and restored control over the Jabal Samhān. Their freedom of activity in the east was short-lived, however. After years of defensive action, SAF finally moved forward in late January and February of 1971. In simultaneous actions, rebel positions in the west were bombed and government forces moved into the Jabal Samhān.

The SAF campaign was forced to retreat before the annual monsoon, and by May 1971, the guerrillas had captured the last remaining government post on the Thamarīt road. The SAF offensive however, was resumed in October, when Operation Jaguar was launched in the east, centered around Madīnat al-Ḥaqq on the mountain plateau. Simultaneously, the Leopard Line was built along the perimeters of the Jabal Samhān to cut off supply routes. This was, in effect, the first phase in a policy of containment,

whereby SAF was to construct a number of "lines," consisting of a series of fortified positions linked by barbed-wire fences and frequent patrols. The idea was to divide the province into isolated sectors: when one area was cleared of rebel activity, the sector to its west would then be isolated and cleared. A similar tactic, Operation Simba, undertaken in May 1972, was an attempt to seal off the border with PDRY. The effort proved premature, however, as had Sultan Qābūs's claim in February that Dhufar was cleared of rebel forces. Rebel reaction was retrenchment, and a third congress was held in Rakhyūt in June 1971. At this meeting, People's Councils were appointed to administer guerrilla-held territory.¹⁸ In January 1972, PFLOAG and NDFLOAG joined ranks to form the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf (also known as PFLOAG).¹⁹

With the SAF closedown during the 1972 monsoon, PFLOAG forces moved back into the mountains, including the Jabal Samhān. At this time, the guerrillas launched what was to be their last forward thrust: a rocket attack on Ṣalālah which produced a direct hit on the officers' mess at the air base. The rebel drive was thwarted however, by the failure of the twin assaults on Mirbāt and Ṭaqah in July. PFLOAG's failure to capture the eastern coastal strip marked the military turning point of the war: from then on, the rebels were steadily pushed back. Operations in the east were limited to hit-and-run attacks, and rocket barrages of Salālah Plain had ceased by October 1973.

Emergence of Government Successes

Meanwhile, an attempt was made again to extend the scope of the revolt by opening a second front in the north. The scheme fell apart when an ex-rebel recognized a senior PFLOAG official, a member of the Front's executive committee, in Muscat. The presence of guerrilla leaders was confirmed by other defectors, and the Sultan's intelligence service launched Operation Jason just before Christmas, rounding up some eighty members of the conspiracy and permanently crippling the subversive network.²⁰ Despite the setback, PFLOAG continued to infiltrate northern Oman. An attempt to disrupt the National Day celebrations on November 18, 1974 was foiled when SAF troops engaged in a shoot-out with five men in a Land-Rover near al-Rustāq, to the northwest of Muscat, on October 29, killing one of them and capturing two others. The dead man was discovered to have been a member of the Front's central committee; subsequent interrogation also led to the capture of a number of other suspects.

Rebel setbacks continued to characterize the Dhufar fighting. Even though Operation Simba was not as successful as had been hoped, it resulted in the establishment of the Mainbrace Line, a set of fortified mountaintop positions centered on the border post at Sarfayt and overlooking the strip of wooded hills between the seacoast and the desert. SAF's success in maintaining Mainbrace during the 1972 monsoon season, despite constant siege by the rebels, meant that valuable time was not lost in the autumn recapturing positions abandoned in the previous spring. In addition to expanding the foothold in the extreme west, SAF spent the autumn of 1972 in carrying the attack to important areas in eastern and central Dhufar.

By early spring 1973, government troops had begun to capture key points in the western Jabal Qamar, and naval craft stepped up surveillance of the rebel-held coast. It was clear by this time that the Sultanate had gained the upper hand in the rebellion. Not only was SAF able to mobilize 3500 troops and some forty-five aircraft against a rebel total of approximately 2000 hard-core and militia insurgents combined, but Sultan Qābūs had been notably successful in mobilizing outside support, including combat troops from Iran.²¹ Iranian paratroopers were key elements in Operation Thimble of December 1973, when the Thamarīt road was recovered and permanently held open, providing the first ground link between Muscat and Ṣalālah in several years.

Subsequent SAF activity was directed towards clearing central Dhufar from enemy control. In early 1974, the Hornbeam Line was built as a major part of this strategy. Stretching inland for nearly fifty miles from Mughsayl on the coast and roughly twenty miles west of the Thamarīt road, the Hornbeam Line was the most ambitious of the government lines. Its purpose was to severely restrict supply convoys, including camel trains, from reaching the area to its east.²² Thus the line divided Dhufar into a largely government-controlled area to the east and a smaller “no-man’s land” to the west, while government forces used the remainder of the spring to attack guerrilla positions in the Jabal Qamar.

With its position rapidly crumbling by mid-1974, PFLOAG seemed ready to cooperate with an Arab League mediation committee. Although the committee visited Muscat on May 10-12 however, it was refused admission to PDRY, and as PFLOAG refused to send a delegation to Cairo to meet with the committee, insisting instead that the Arab League representatives should visit “liberated” Dhufar, the mediation attempt came to nothing.

The revolutionaries were also troubled by internal dissension. The loss of considerable PDRY support—since the Aden regime was desperate for loans extended by Kuwayt and Abu Dhabi—threatened PFLOAG’s continued survival in Dhufar. But even more divisive was the appearance of a split over strategy between Dhufari and Gulf members of the Front.²³ The end result was a “decentralization” of command which allowed the Front’s different units to adopt individual responses to problems in their specific areas. The decision to concentrate military activity on Oman alone was reflected in the truncation of the Front’s name to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman (PFLO).²⁴

PFLO’s problems continued unabated. Following the 1974 monsoon season, the Sultanate accelerated its military offensive by engaging in heavy fighting concentrated around Sarfayt. By December, a new series of positions, the Hammer Line, was built to the west of the Hornbeam Line. Iranian participation in this offensive was complemented by the combined Omani-Iranian assault on Rakhyūt in January 1975: the town was captured at a heavy toll in Iranian lives. Following this success, the Damavand Line was built from Rakhyūt northward, bisecting the strip between the Hornbeam Line and the border, and forcing the rebels into an even smaller operating territory.

The government's final push began at the close of the 1975 monsoon when Iranian troops moved into areas north of Rakhyūt. Other Iranian contingents moved south from Sarfayt towards the sea while the PFLO base at Ḥawf was attacked by Sultanate jets. The offensive became a rout by late November as Omani troops occupied the final villages in western Dhufar, unopposed by the rebels who had slipped back into PDRY. On December 11, 1975, before 50,000 enthusiastic people in Muscat, Sultan Qābūs declared that the Dhufar War was officially over.

Despite scattered shelling from across the border, the downing of a helicopter carrying the commander of the SAF Dhofar Brigade and PFLO's insistence that "The caravan will continue its journey, however much the dogs bark,"²⁵ the end had apparently come to over a decade of fighting. Ninety-four rebels surrendered in November and over 100 turned themselves in during December, among them some of the most important of the guerrilla leaders. By February, the total number of surrendered rebels had swelled to 275 over the preceding three months. Yet, despite all this, PFLO refused to fold completely, its leaders defiant and its propaganda outlets claiming continued fighting.

The Wider Impact of the Rebellion

The Sultanate's success in the war was due to a combination of factors. Much was owed to the outside support marshalled, and chief among the supporters was Britain.²⁶ Although the British had been largely excluded from activity or movement in Dhufar by the cautiousness of Sa'īd bin Taymūr, the Sultan had been forced eventually to call on the British-officered SAF for help there. British casualties were reported in the fighting as early as 1966. By April 1971, it was stated that SAF benefitted from forty-nine seconded British officers, seventy-one on contract and about sixty pilots.²⁷ By the end of the rebellion in 1975, the British presence had grown to 700, including 220 officers on private contract, sixty Special Air Service (SAS) members, seventy-five men from the Royal Engineers, and 147 RAF personnel at Ṣalālah Air Base.²⁸ Officially, casualties were stated to be eleven killed in action and eighteen wounded, but it was rumored that the SAS toll alone had been seventy-three deaths.²⁹

The role of SAS in Dhufar was long denied, even though the Regiment's ties with Oman stretched back to the successful Anglo-Omani assault on rebel positions in the northern Oman mountains of the Jabal al-Akhḍar in January 1959, and had been kept current by several training exercises during the following decade. In fact, an SAS squadron had been posted to Dhufar in 1970 under the cover of British Army Training Team (BATT), although this was not officially acknowledged until much later. Thus, the British government admitted that SAS elements were active in Dhufar but only in a training capacity. Continuing reports of SAS casualties during 1972 and after failed to draw a confession of combat roles from Whitehall even by early 1974. Nevertheless, these elite troops contributed heavily to eventual victory.

In addition to personnel, the Sultanate relied heavily on British equipment and

weapons. An order was placed in April 1968 for Jet Provost trainer aircraft, in September 1970 for five Skyvan transport craft, with more ordered in September 1971, followed by an order for a dozen Strikemaster fighters and various naval patrol craft. The culmination of these purchases came in late 1974, when the Sultanate contracted for twelve Anglo-French Jaguar fighters and twenty-eight Rapier missiles, at a cost of between £71 million and £83 million. British interests were also present in commercial activities in Dhufar, such as port construction at Raysūt, roadbuilding, banking and communications.

Whereas the British presence had been opposed by only a handful of Arab states, Iranian aid was almost universally condemned. In retrospect, it is difficult to determine the precise origin of the Shah's commitment in Oman. The interest appeared as early as Qābūs's accession in 1970 when the Shah sent a congratulatory cable to the new Sultan. The establishment of diplomatic relations in August 1971 was followed by several meetings between the two rulers, and by early 1973, Iran had sent a half-dozen helicopters and crews to help in Dhufar. In April, the Iranian Prime Minister, Amir 'Abbas Hoveyda, admitted that Iran was responding to the Sultanate's request for aid, but both countries continued to deny for another year that Iranian units were involved in combat. Nevertheless, it was reported in June 1973 that Iranian paratroopers were already stationed in Oman. Even though these troops were to provide the muscle for the clearing of the Thamarit road in December, their role was not officially acknowledged until February 1974.

By the end of 1974, the Iranian total had reportedly grown to 2000 troops, but Iran's role was even more pronounced in 1975 when totals reached a level of between 3500 and 5000 troops. A local headquarters was established at Thamarit. From there, Iranian Phantom F-5s patrolled the PDRY border and Iranian destroyers shelled that part of the Dhufar coast then under rebel control. The Iranians were at the center of Rakhyūt's recapture in January and played a prominent role in the "big push" of December.

One reason for their mushrooming presence in Oman was the change in Iranian self-perception of their role and the potential for combat training that Oman offered. The crack ranger battalions of the 1973 Operation Thimble had been replaced by units of decidedly lesser quality which were rotated out at frequent intervals in attempts to give many elements as much battle experience as possible. However, this policy resulted in alarming losses among Iranian combat forces, reportedly consisting of over a quarter of the 400 total deaths suffered by the Sultanate and its allies throughout the entire rebellion.³⁰

The Shah's reasons for involvement in Dhufar reflected his concern over Communist penetration on his southern flank, in addition to the north and east (*i.e.*, the Soviet Union and its friendliness with Iraq), and the potential security threat posed if Oman and/or the Gulf states should fall to revolutionaries. Consequently, he declared that PFLOAG represented the "forces of subversion, destruction, chaos and murder,"³¹ and enthusiastically backed Sultan Qābūs's efforts. In return, he expected a free hand

for his military forces and Omani cooperation in regional security schemes. In early 1973, reports surfaced that Iran sought to establish a joint policing system with Oman over all shipping entering the Gulf.³² PFLOAG then charged that the Sultanate had allowed Iran to build a naval base on al-Ghanam Island, just off the Musandam Peninsula (which forms the southern shore of the Strait of Hormuz). In early 1975, an agreement between Iran and Oman for joint naval operations to keep both coastlines "secure and free" was announced by Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Qays al-Zawāwī.³³

The Sultanate's heavy reliance on Iran proved to be a considerable obstacle in its pursuit of good relations with fellow Arab states. The rest of the Arabian Peninsula tended to view Iran as invader, a perception that was given impetus by the Iranian occupation of the Gulf islands of Abū Mūsā and the two Tunbs in November 1971. Consequently, the Sultan's pleas for help to Saudi Arabia, Abu Dhabi and the other Gulf states encountered less than adequate response. PFLOAG made the most of the situation with propaganda claiming that an Iranian base had been constructed on Ḥallanīya Island, one of the Kuriya Muriyas off Oman's southern coast, and that its troops were not subject to Omani control.³⁴

Moderate Arab states introduced several schemes to reduce Iranian influence in Oman, one such attempt being the unsuccessful Arab League mission in mid-1974. Concurrent reports emerged that Egypt and Saudi Arabia sought to replace Iranian troops by Arab forces, notably some from the Sudan. Pressure on the Sultanate led to the statement by al-Zawāwī on October 10, 1974, that the Iranian troops were being withdrawn from Oman—what he neglected to add was that they were being replaced by other units. In a related action in early 1975, King Ḥusayn of Jordan sent an army battalion to relieve SAF units on the Thamarit road, but they were withdrawn under pressure in the autumn and replaced by more Iranian soldiers.

It might have been expected with the virtual cessation of hostilities by the end of 1975 that Iran would pull out of Oman, but the Shah proved reluctant: "At the moment that Sultan Qabous desires the withdrawal of Iranian troops, we will leave. But the Sultan must himself say he no longer needs Iranian troops."³⁵ Instead, Iran sought to maintain its continued presence by promises of economic and agricultural help.

A principal reason behind the crack in the door which had allowed Iranian entry was Arab reluctance to become involved.³⁶ The one major exception was Oman's fellow monarchy of Jordan and, like Iran, a partner to the Anglo-American sphere of interests in the region. Qābūs visited 'Ammān in June 1971 for the purpose of acquiring Jordanian assistance in military training. This was soon granted and several hundred Jordanian officers and NCOs were subsequently stationed at SAF headquarters and at the Ghallah training camp. The important nature of the ties between the two countries was reflected in the appointment of the former Jordanian army chief of staff, General Muhammad Khalīl 'Abd al-Dā'im, as the first Ambassador to Oman. In addition, it was reported that Jordanian soldiers were active in intelligence duties, and the rebels claimed to have killed Jordanian intelligence officers in Dhufar.

However, the most substantial commitments by Jordan were made in 1975. It was announced on March 1 that Jordan was giving Oman thirty-one Hawker Hunter jets and that a Jordanian combat battalion had already relieved Omani troops along Thamarit road.³⁷ But regional uneasiness over Arab troops fighting other Arabs alongside Iranian forces resulted in enough pressure to cause Jordan to withdraw its battalions after six months.³⁸

Oman's disappointment with its peninsular neighbors arose after Qābūs, soon after his accession, had embarked on a program of good relations throughout the Arab world. He managed to extract promises of aid from the oil-producing states of the Gulf, but actually received little concrete assistance. The Sultan's visit to al-Riyāḍ in December 1971 ended in complete rapprochement between the two traditionally antagonistic countries, but financial grants announced were not always forthcoming and military help was limited to an offer to allow Omani soldiers to train at Saudi bases.³⁹ Relations with Kuwait were less cordial as the Sultanate protested Kuwait's economic aid to PDRY, even though it was restricted to health and educational purposes.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, the oil states took the lead in promoting the unsuccessful Arab League mediation in 1974. Abu Dhabi and Saudi financial inducements to PDRY in 1974 and 1975 undoubtedly persuaded Aden to reconsider its position vis-a-vis PFLO. These states also served as intermediaries between PDRY and the Sultanate, as indicated by the visit of Aden's Foreign Minister, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Muṭi', to al-Riyāḍ in July 1975, followed by his tour of the Gulf in November. Despite the seeming hesitancy of al-Riyāḍ, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, and others to become involved, their interests clearly lay in strong opposition to the leftist threat presented by the Dhufari rebels. But their actions regarding the southern part of the Peninsula were equally motivated by resentment over Iranian soldiers on Arab soil.

That the rebels of Dhufar were able to conduct such a protracted guerrilla war owes a great deal to their ability to raise support in varied quarters and to shift from one source to the next as it became expedient. The increasing radicalization of the movement in the late 1960s complemented the political evolution in neighboring PDRY. This was fortunate since the Aden regime proved to be the single most important factor—outside of the revolutionaries themselves—in the prolongation of the rebellion, with support and influence manifested in ideological, strategic and logistical fields.

Aden's solidarity with the rebel movement drew upon shared ties with the ANM as well as the common experience of facing the British as a foe. The natural consequence of PDRY support for the rebels was hostility with the Sultanate which, at times, threatened to erupt into open warfare between the two states.⁴¹ Aden had alleged Sultanate aggression on its territory as early as 1968, and the Sultanate's air force bombed artillery emplacements in PDRY in May 1972 after the Omani frontier post at Ḥabrūt had been shelled. With the collapse of the revolt in late 1975, and following the tentative attempts at reconciliation taking place in the previous year, it seemed paradoxical that Omani-PDRY relations were at their worst ever. PDRY was reportedly

using heavy artillery to bomb Omani positions and the Sultan warned that PDRY was massing troops along the border in an act of "wanton aggression."⁴² The volatile nature of the situation was re-emphasized in November 1976 when PDRY artillery shot down an Iranian fighter on the eve of the first conference of the Gulf Foreign Ministers in Muscat—an act which contributed to the strained atmosphere of the meeting. Faced with the possibility of declared war, the Sultan's much-criticized decision to purchase Jaguar fighters and the Rapier missile system seemed at least partially justified.

In a larger sense, PDRY served as a link between the revolutionary movement and the Communist world. China and the Soviet Union had become involved in the rebellion at an early date although the extent of their support fluctuated considerably over the years. Even though the genesis of Chinese involvement is unclear, an official PFLOAG delegation had visited Peking early in 1970 and was followed by regular coverage of rebel exploits by Chinese organs, such as the New China News Agency (Hsinhua) and *Red Horizon*.⁴³ Several groups of guerrillas were sent to China for training and PFLOAG received Chinese supplies ranging from automatic rifles to medicine.⁴⁴ The high point of Peking's influence was reached in 1971, when Chinese advisors were reported to be present at PFLOAG bases in PDRY, if not in Dhufar.

But with the Sino-Iranian rapprochement of early 1973, Peking's support for PFLOAG assumed a more passive attitude and the Soviet Union increased its assistance. Although Russian arms and training facilities had been made available to the rebels since the late 1960s, more substantial commitments were made in conjunction with assistance from Syria, Iraq and Libya in 1974 and 1975. In late 1975, Russian advisors were reportedly directing the PDRY artillery barrage of Omani positions in Dhufar.

Ties with other Communist states had also been established and deepened, through journeys to North Korea, Eastern Europe and Cuba by PFLOAG officials. Cuban soldiers trained PDRY and Dhufari troops while Cuban pilots flew PDRY's MiG-21s.⁴⁶ In 1972, a delegation of the South Vietnam NLF toured the "liberated" areas of Dhufar.

The rebellion also received attention from two of the Arab world's "mavericks," Iraq and Libya. Baghdad played an important role, both ideologically and in terms of physical support, during the formative stages of the revolt and had been the guiding force behind NDFLOAG. It also saw itself as a mentor to the radical wing of PFLO following the stormy 1974 conference but reversed its policy with the obvious denouement of the rebellion and chose to establish diplomatic relations with the Sultanate in late 1975.⁴⁷

Libya, on the other hand, moved in the opposite direction: from encouragement for the Sultan's position to diatribes against it. President al-Qadhafi reportedly advised Sultan Qabus during the latter's visit to Tripoli in December 1972 to invade the United Arab Emirates since they were "historically part of Oman,"⁴⁸ and a Libyan military delegation discussed the possibility of Libyan aid with the Sultan in

Muscat during the following month. But the Sultanate's reliance on British officers and then Iranian troops served to dissuade al-Qadhāfi and by mid-1974, Tripoli had opened its doors to PFLO representatives.⁴⁹ In 1975, Libya passed on a group of Russian SAM-7 missiles to PFLO, and the Libyan President made several threats to invade Oman if foreign troops were not sent home immediately. Despite the heavy publicity, however, Libya's role in the conflict was never more than marginal.

Much of the international concern over the war in Dhufar focused on the ideological schism of the struggle and the high stakes involved, *i. e.*, the Gulf with all its petroleum wealth. Thus, it is not surprising that the "domino theory" was frequently mentioned and the comparison made to Vietnam:

In both countries a long history of serious neglect gave rise to much local discontent. Outside powers were quick to seize an opportunity and soon provided arms and training through a co-operative neighbouring country, together with an international publicity machine which enabled the movement to gain ground in a sustained and rapid manner. Local officials who remained loyal to the established government were terrorised or murdered, and defection from the rebel movement was followed by swift retribution. In both wars, climatic conditions resulting from the annual passage of the monsoon have restricted the length of the fighting season. The nature of the terrain has severely limited the effectiveness of superior air power.⁵⁰

The similarity resulted in a paradox in US policy. Fearful that a rebel victory could result in eventual Communist control over the entire Gulf, the US sought to guarantee the Sultanate's victory; yet, traumatized by the Vietnam experience, there could be no direct involvement. Consequently, the US encouraged Britain in the role of principal supporter, invoked the Nixon Doctrine to wage war by Iranian and Jordanian proxy, and kept its own profile suitably low.⁵¹

Sultan Qābūs, on his first visit to Washington in January 1975, received a royal reception, including discussions with President Ford, Secretary of State Kissinger, Secretary of Defense Schlesinger, and CIA Director, Colby. In return, the US requested occasional landing rights at the British RAF base on al-Masīrah Island. Fortunately, the request was dropped before it raised wide criticism: it would have proved embarrassing for Qābūs to have provided Washington with a small toehold when al-Bahrayn was proceeding to negotiate an American withdrawal from its last military installation in the Arab world. Nevertheless, following the mid-1976 announcement that Britain would abandon its bases at Salālah and al-Masīrah, rumors were persistent that the US would press for the use of al-Masīrah.

Despite the predominant attention lavished on the international and ideological aspects of the revolt, true success in Dhufar will ultimately be measured by the attitude and allegiance shown by the people of the province. By the time of the virtual cessation of military action in late 1975, the Sultanate's leadership had shown its willingness and determination to attack the social and economic problems of Dhufar. The province's share of the state's development budget far outweighed its proportion of population, and Dhufaris were prominent in government positions, including three

ministerial portfolios. Seemingly, not only military victory was within the Sultanate's grasp, but a good deal of progress had been made towards replacing a situation of mistrust and neglect with a spirit of unification and mutual cooperation throughout the Sultanate of Oman.

NOTES

1. There have been a number of works dealing with the Dhufar rebellion, differing considerably in scope, accuracy and ideological viewpoint. Among the most comprehensive are D. L. Price, "Oman: Insurgency and Development," *Conflict Studies*, No. 53 (Jan. 1975); and Fred Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), especially the chapter on "Guerrilla War in Dhofar," pp. 304-360. Price visited Muscat and Dhufar, and writes from a pro-British viewpoint while Halliday visited Dhufar at the invitation of the guerrillas and reports from the opposite end of the spectrum. Two other excellent articles written with opposing views are Ray Cleveland, "Revolution in Dhofar; Sultanate of Oman," *Middle East Forum*, Vol. 48, Nos. 3-4 (1971), pp. 93-102; and Fawwaz Trabulsi, "The Liberation of Dhofar," *MERIP Reports*, No. 6 (Jan. 1972), pp. 3-11. In addition, the revolt has been treated by Chris Kutschera, "Revolution arabe: Il n'y a pas que la Palestine," *Jeune Afrique*, No. 529 (Feb. 23, 1971), pp. 19-25; R. M. Burrell, "Rebellion in Dhofar: The Spectre of Vietnam," *New Middle East*, Nos. 42-43 (March-April 1972), pp. 55-58; *ibid.*, "Politics and Participation Where Britannia Once Ruled," *New Middle East*, No. 51 (Dec. 1972), pp. 32-36; *ibid.* and Alvin Cottrell, *Iran, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Indian Ocean* (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1972), pp. 24-30; Andrew Wilson, "Sultan Qabus Faces Dhofar Rebels," *Middle East International*, No. 3 (June 1971), pp. 32-33; Gerard Laliberte, "La Guerilla du Dhofar," *Etudes Internationales*, Vol. 4, Nos. 1-2 (March-June 1973), pp. 159-181; R. P. Owen, "The Rebellion in Dhofar—A Threat to Western Interests in the Gulf," *The World Today*, Vol. 29, No. 6 (June 1973), pp. 266-272; Philippe Rondot, "Le Sultanat d'Oman devant la Rebellion du Dhofar," *Maghreb-Mashrek*, No. 70 (Oct.-Dec. 1975), pp. 38-46; J. B. Kelly, "Hadramaut, Oman, Dhufar: The Experience of Revolution," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (May 1976); and John Townsend, *Oman: The Making of a Modern State* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 95-112. The account here also relies on numerous interviews held in Muscat and Salālah, and reports from major British, American and area newspapers and periodicals.

2. The Sherā are thought to have been the original inhabitants whose mountain habitat was overrun by the Qarā and Mahrā sometime before the rise of Islam, and who were followed at a later date by the Kathīr. The Qarā and Sherā live in close proximity in the Jabal Qarā, Jabal Qamar and eastern Salālah Plain, with the Qarā speaking the Sherī language and exercising a protective status over the Sherā, similar to the da'īf (weak) status of certain groups of the coastal towns. The Mahrā of Dhufar are concentrated on the eastern fringes of the Jabal Samhān, although the majority of Mahrā in Arabia are found in what is now the Sixth Governorate of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The Mahri and Sherī languages, although Semitic, are not intelligible to Arabic-speakers.

3. This rebellion grew out of the reassertion in 1955 of control over the interior of Oman by the Muscat-based government for the first time in half a century. An ensuing uprising, although essentially tribal in nature, received moral support from various Arab governments because of the Sultanate's ties to Great Britain. See the present writer's article, "Britain and 'the Oman War': An Arabian Entanglement," *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 63 (N. S. 7), Pt. 3 (Oct. 1976), pp. 285-298.

4. After attacks were carried out on personnel of the John Mecom-Pure Oil Company in 1965, Ṣalālah was surrounded by barbed-wire fences and the *jibālīs* were refused entry. This action disrupted traditional trading patterns, caused economic hardship, and provoked more discontent. Oil exploration in Dhufar was begun originally by Petroleum Development (Oman) under a concession granted in 1937. However, they later relinquished the concession and Sultan Sa 'īd bin Taymūr subsequently granted a new one to Wendell Phillips. His assignee, Dhufar-Cities Service, began exploration in 1952 but likewise was unable to discover commercially viable quantities of oil. The concession was surrendered to John Mecom-Pure Oil in 1962, which was also unsuccessful after several years of activity. Following a brief attempt by Continental Oil, the concession in 1969 was once again taken up by Petroleum Development (Oman), by this time producing oil in northern Oman, which continued exploration through the mid-1970s.

5. Walid Kazzīha, *Revolutionary Transformation in the Arab World* (London: Charles Knight, 1975), p. 92. Kazzīha has written the first extensive study of the ANM.

6. *Ibid.* This split was a reflection of a larger ideological dispute between the ANM's Levant and Gulf elements. The Gulf section remained significantly to the right of the other in political orientation and continued to demonstrate pro-Nāsir tendencies. In consequence, the DBS looked to Egypt for support where it was allowed to establish an office. In addition, the Kuwayti ANM leadership resolved to cooperate closely with the DBS.

7. The Dhufari Soldiers' Organization was a loosely-organized assemblage of Dhufari soldiers and policemen in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, the Trucial Oman Scouts and the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF). Throughout the rebellion, the Scouts (based on what is now the United Arab Emirates) faced the problem of Dhufaris in its ranks going on leave and never returning, presumably to join the rebels in Dhufar.

8. The text of a declaration issued on June 9 is to be found in *Documents of the National Struggle in Oman and the Arabian Gulf* (London: The Gulf Committee, 1974; hereinafter referred to as *Documents*), pp. 7-9. This is a translation of *Watha'iq al-Nidal al-Watani, 1964-1974* (Beirut: Dār al-Tali 'ah, 1974). Two of the new committee members were "Yusuf Alawi, the DLF representative in Cairo, and Mohammad Ahmad al-Ghassani, a native of Salala who had been working until recently for an oil company in the Gulf. Though these two militants came to represent the DLF's two conflicting factions, both originated from the pre-1964 DLF (sic), and subsequent divisions were subordinated at this stage to the decision to launch an immediate armed struggle. While the spread of Nasserism through the Arab world influenced the DLF it was not the Nasserists but the tribesmen who dominated." Halliday, *Arabia Without Sultans*, p. 317. The division between the two groups was to show up later in the 1968 conference and in the post-1970 defections by many members of the movement. Halliday discusses DLF ideology on pp. 361-365. The 1965 conference was also important since the guerrillas dated the official beginning of the revolution from June 9, 1965.

9. Sa 'īd had been inspecting the Dhofar Force headquarters at Arzāt, just outside Ṣalālah. As he was taking the salute from the honor guard, approximately a dozen members of the guard followed their leader's command to fire at the Sultan. Since they shot into the setting sun and the Sultan was standing at a lower level than the soldiers (and being short himself), the fusillade passed over his head. The Pakistani commander of Dhofar Force was then wounded by the leader of the guard who was in turn killed by one of the Sultan's slaves. Sa 'īd later remarked that he finally realized what it was like to be in front of a firing squad. Interview with a member of SAF at the time of the attempt. The incident caused Sa 'īd to retreat even deeper into his Ṣalālah palace and to introduce SAF (predominantly Baluchī in composition) into Dhufar to counterbalance the suspect Dhofar Force (which was mainly *jibālī*).

10. The NLF grew out of a coalition of the Aden branch of the ANM with other nationalist and Marxist-Leninist groups, and constituted the first government of the People's Republic of Southern Yemen in 1967 after having turned back a challenge by the Egyptian-supported Front for the Liberation of Occupied Southern Yemen (FLOSY). A coup d'état on June 22, 1969, replaced the relatively moderate President Qahtān al-Sha 'bī with a more radical leadership, and the name of the country was changed to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) by autumn.

11. The text of the decisions taken at Ḥamrin is found in *Documents*, pp. 9-11.
12. Thamarit (also known as Midway), located on the Najd, is the site of an SAF camp. The only road connecting Muscat with Ṣalālah passes through Thamarit; the road's importance is underscored by the fact that until 1973 it provided Ṣalālah with its only link to the outside world during the summer monsoon season. Dhufar is the only part of Arabia touched by the monsoon.
13. Claudie Fayein, "Révolution arabe: Il n'y a pas que la Palestine," *Jeune Afrique*, No. 530 (Mar. 2, 1971), p. 15. Political commissars were introduced, composed of "in the main, defectors from the Kuwait Army and the Trucial Oman Scouts." Halliday, in *The Sunday Times*, March 22, 1970.
14. The new Front issued a "Declaration on the Launching of Armed Struggle, 12 June 1970," published in *Documents*, pp. 11-20.
15. The palace was stormed by members of one of the SAF regiments along with armed tribesmen (originally from northern Oman), and it was defended by the Sultan himself and his slaves. Sa 'id, wounded in the fighting, was taken by the RAF first to al-Baḥrayn and then to London, where he remained until his death in October 1972.
16. For more information on development in Dhufar, see *Sultanate of Oman: Southern Region—Dhofar* (Muscat: Ministry of Information and Tourism, 1974); and "Oman: A Special MEED Report," *Middle East Economic Digest* (June 1976). Descriptions of CAT activities are given in *Voice of the Arab World* (London), Feb. 20, 1974; and *Oman* (Embassy of Oman, London), No. 4 (April 1974).
17. In 1970, SAF strength was at ca. 2700 men. By 1975, it had grown to between 12,000 and 15,000, and the percentage of Arabs and Baluchis was reversed from 70% Baluchi to 70% Arab.
18. See the *Gulf Bulletin* (London), No. 2 (Oct.-Nov. 1972), p. 6, for a complete statement from this congress. Another outcome of Rakhyūt was an outline of the organization's objectives, the "National Democratic Program." See *Documents*, pp. 24-30, and Halliday, *Arabia without Sultans*, pp. 519-525.
19. A joint communique (*Documents*, pp. 57-60) had been issued by the two groups in Dec. 1970, by which they announced their intention to cooperate fully. With the 1971 merger, the breach between the two approaches to radical action in eastern Arabia had been temporarily healed. The decision to present a common front was taken at a conference at Ahlish in Dec. 1971; for the text of the declaration on the merger, see *Documents*, pp. 20-24.
20. Further arrests and discoveries of arms were made in Jan., Feb., and March. Other cells and/or caches were uncovered in Abu Dhabi (involving some forty members of the UAA Defense Force), Sharjah, Ra's al-Khaymah, al-Baḥrayn, Qatar and Kuwait.
21. It is not clear when the Iranians first arrived in Oman. The Palestine News Agency (Wafa) alleged in Nov. 1972 that Iranian planes had participated in recent Dhufar operations. *Arab Report and Record*, Nov. 1-15, 1972. The PFLOAG weekly, *Ṣawt al-Thawrah*, claimed on Mar. 6, 1973, that 600 Iranian troops had been sent to Ṣalālah. *Arab Report and Record*, Mar. 1-15, 1973. The *Washington Post* reported on June 22 that "at least 300 Iranian paratroopers and a half dozen Iranian helicopters and transport planes are presently stationed in Oman."
22. The line is described in *Middle East Monitor*, Vol. 4, No. 9 (May 1, 1974); *Washington Post*, Dec. 20, 1974; and Price, "Oman," p. 8.
23. This split is discussed in detail in *An-Nahar Arab Report*, Vol. 5, No. 32 (Aug. 12, 1974).
24. For a communique of the conference, held in July 1974, as well as a list of the points falling under the new program, see *Documents*, pp. 87-104.
25. PFLO statement made in Aden, reported in *Middle East Economic Digest*, Dec. 19, 1975.
26. An examination of the international ramifications of the rebellion is given in John Duke Anthony, "Insurrection and Intervention: The War in Dhufar," in Abbas Amirie, ed., *The Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean in International Politics* (Tehran: Institute for International Political and Economic Studies, 1975), pp. 287-303.
27. *The Economist*, Apr. 3, 1971.
28. *The Times*, Dec. 9, 1975. One of the attractions for British pilots was the pay, said to be £8000 tax-free with free housing and uniforms. By contrast, RAF salaries were about £5630 after six years. *Ibid.* Ground-based officers were reported to earn £6000 tax-free. *Observer* (Lon-

don), Mar. 3, 1974. Nevertheless, contract officers had few of the fringe benefits, such as pensions, that seconded personnel had.

29. *Observer*, Jan. 11, 1976.

30. *Ibid.*; *New York Times*, Jan. 25, 1976. Later estimates put Iranian deaths at over 1000. *Financial Times*, Jan. 14, 1977.

31. *Arab Report and Record*, Feb. 1-14, 1974.

32. *Washington Post*, Mar. 23, 1973; *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar. 27, 1973.

33. *Middle East Economic Digest*, Jan. 10, 1975. Al-Ghanam Island had been the site of a Royal Naval base until the 1950s. See Rupert Hay, "Great Britain's Relations with Yemen and Oman," *Middle Eastern Affairs*, Vol. 11, No. 5 (May 1960), p. 145.

34. "First the Iranian military command is completely independent in its military operations. The captured Iranian pilot has admitted that the Iranian forces have their own staff and receive their orders directly from Teheran and that they are in conflict with the English over the establishment of their domination in Oman. This gives the lie to the assertions by Qabus and Qays az-Zawawi that the Iranian forces are there at the request of Qabus and under his command. The newsmen and the captured Iranian pilot have revealed that huge American Galaxy aircraft fly from the Iranian base in Bandar Abbas and Isfahan directly to Manston, carrying everything needed by the Iranian forces—from water to armored vehicles and artillery.

.....
The Iranian forces use Iranian currency, Iranian stamps and Iranian money orders. There is even a branch of Bank Melli Iran at Thumrayt (sic) airbase. Has Dhofar become an Iranian province over which Iranian sovereignty is exercised?" *Voice of Oman* (Aden) radio broadcast of Nov. 12, 1975, cited in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service—Middle East and North Africa*, Nov. 18, 1975.

35. Interview with *al-Siyāsah* (Kuwayt), reported in *Middle East Economic Digest*, Aug. 22, 1975. Iranian troops remained in Dhufar throughout 1976. Early in 1977, however, reports emerged that Iran had reduced its military strength there and was considering withdrawing most of its troops. *Financial Times*, Jan. 14 and 21, 1977.

36. Other, non-Arab, support had also come from Pakistan and, briefly, India. Pakistani officers and NCOs had long served in the old Dhofar Force and later naval officers were seconded to man Oman's new patrol crafts. In addition to a few Indian military doctors, an Indian military advisory team was assigned to Oman in 1973 but quickly left after objections were raised by Pakistan and Iran.

37. *Gulf Mirror*, Mar. 3, 1975; *Oman News* (Embassy of Oman, Washington), No. 2/75 (Mar.-Apr. 1975). Sixteen of the fighters were delivered on Feb. 27, 1975. These were the same planes that several news accounts had indicated were sold to South Africa; their gift to Oman came shortly after Iran had announced the transfer of twenty Phantom F-5s to 'Ammān.

38. King Ḥusayn visited Oman twice during this period and even paid a visit to his troops on the Thamarit road, accompanied by Sultan Qābūs. *The Times*, Apr. 21, 1975.

39. This was less helpful than might be supposed since SAF was largely British-equipped while Saudi Arabia relied almost exclusively on US materiel.

40. Tension between the two countries rose to a peak in July 1974 when the Kuwayti charge d'affaires in Muscat was expelled. *Gulf Mirror*, July 28, 1974.

41. Among the instances of aid given by Aden were training and troop bases in the Sixth Governorate, the use of Mukallā and Ḥawf ports to bring in supplies, propaganda support in Arab and other international forums, the establishment of the *Voice of Oman/Voice of the Revolution* radio station on PDRY soil, air and artillery cover along the border, and, allegedly, "Seven companies of South Yemeni forces, which Omani intelligence reports were guarding rebel supply lines in Dhofar. . . ." *Washington Post*, Jan. 12, 1976.

42. *Middle East Economic Digest*, Jan. 2 and Feb. 6, 1976.

43. A typical article is "Red Guerillas of the Arabian Gulf," by Barbro Karabuda, *Red Horizon*, Vol. 9, No. 5 (1970), pp. 48-54. Among other things, this article claims that Sultan Sa'īd bin Taymūr had been killed in the 1966 assassination attempt.

44. "Their arms and munitions are Chinese, as is the insignia that they frequently wear on their shirts. The cans of pineapples occasionally opened in the course of the day are Chinese, and so is the tent canvas, embroidered with flowers and red lanterns with matching pillows, which I

once saw in a branch hut. The Marxist literature, almost the only kind found here, is Chinese. Finally, so are the doctors and medicines which are expected shortly in Ghaida, the first medical post accessible from Dhofar. Although the guerrilla organization in Dhofar is Chinese in nature, the Dhofaris defend themselves." Fayein, "Révolution arabe," p. 17. (My translation.) The author of this article was a French doctor long resident in northern Yemen who was invited by PFLOAG to tour "liberated" Dhufar in 1970. Experiences of training camps in Peking and Odessa, based on reputedly first-hand accounts are given in Ranulph Fiennes, *Where Soldiers Fear to Tread* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975), pp. 30-41. Fiennes was a British officer who spent several years fighting in Dhufar; his book also recounts his experiences there.

45. A joint communique issued at that time is included in *Documents*, pp. 60-64.

46. An important article on Cuban involvement in Africa and Asia was published by the *Christian Science Monitor*, Jan. 14, 1976. There are also reports of East German personnel currently in PDRY.

47. This action coincided with Baghdād's expressed interest in the proposed Gulf security pact, and followed the Iraqi-Iranian accord reached at Algiers in March 1975.

48. *Gulf Mirror*, March 25, 1973.

49. The Front opened an office in Tripoli in Dec. 1973, escorted a Libyan delegation through Dhufar and received approximately one million Libyan dinars in aid. *Arab Report and Record*, Oct. 1-15, 1974.

50. Burrell, "Rebellion in Dhofar," p. 58.

51. Direct contacts were limited to visits by Richard Helms, then Ambassador to Iran and formerly the Director of the CIA, infrequent tours of the Dhufar mountains by military missions, the sometime presence of American military advisors attached to the Iranian army, and sales of a few August Bell helicopters and TOW anti-tank missiles.