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Yemen (Aden)

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE SURVEY

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Armed Forces

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YEMEN (ADEN)

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Armed Forces



A. Defense establishment

The armed forces of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (P.D.R.Y.)¹ consist of a 12,000-man army, a navy with a complement of nine small vessels and about 300 personnel, and an air force with 52 aircraft and an estimated 235 personnel. There are four paramilitary, intelligence, or militia or-

¹The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen is also referred to as Yemen (Aden).

ganizations: the 5,000-man Public Security Force; the small Revolutionary Security Service; the Popular Forces, around 2,000 strong; and the 5,000-10,000-man People's Militia. (S)

The primary mission of the armed forces is national defense and the maintenance of internal security. Since the British withdrawal in November 1967, the armed forces' ability to carry out their mission has been tested on numerous occasions by dissident tribes, exiled political factions, and deposed sheikhs. In 1972 military forces effectively repelled a small and ill-planned invasion by a coalition of dissident forces supported by the army and air force of the Yemen Arab Republic (Y.A.R.).² Border hostilities have occurred several times, with P.D.R.Y. forces invading Y.A.R. territory and then withdrawing. Confrontations of Yemen (Aden) with its neighbors are the results of the government's radical Marxist orientation, which it frequently attempts to export to other states of the Arabian Peninsula. (C)

The armed forces could not successfully defend against a major power. They have, however, repelled incursions from the Y.A.R. and probably could withstand a military attack by Saudi Arabia, but with proper planning and execution, a combined invasion by Y.A.R., Saudi Arabian, and dissident forces would possibly succeed; however, such a threat is unlikely in the near term. (S)

Army leadership has displayed imagination and resourcefulness in combating enemies of the regime and in deploying forces rapidly to widely separated trouble spots. It has also conducted well-planned joint operations, and despite the considerable strain imposed by combat operations, no serious breakdown

²The Yemen Arab Republic is also referred to as Yemen (Sana'a).

in the army's logistical system has occurred. The air force has expanded in size over the past several years. Air crews can now fly operational ground attack missions as well as transport supplies and equipment to army units. The weakest link is the air defense system, which is scattered and not integrated. The navy's capability is limited to patrolling coastal waters and providing limited sealift assistance to the army. Although the government has, with Soviet support, apparently increased the development of the navy, it will probably remain the least important of the regular armed forces. (S)

The primary weaknesses of the armed forces are the complete dependence on foreign, primarily Soviet, military assistance, the low educational level of the personnel, and friction resulting from political and tribal differences. By November 1970, in an attempt to discourage tribalism, no tribal names were being used by members of the armed forces. (C)

Since independence, the armed forces have not greatly interfered with the civilian operation of the government, although many armed forces personnel are members of the ruling National Front (NF) organization. Usually when grumbling and internal disputes have reached a point where intervention by the armed forces might be expected, an external threat against the P.D.R.Y. has developed which has had the effect of uniting the country. (C)

Prior to its establishment as an independent country in November 1967, the state's external defense and internal security were the responsibility of the United Kingdom, which provided the expanding indigenous ground forces with all materiel. Since independence the P.D.R.Y. has swung toward the Communist states for assistance. There are no known bilateral military alliances or treaties, but technical and military assistance agreements have been concluded with the U.S.S.R., East Germany, Hungary, and North Korea, and possibly with the People's Republic of China and Syria. (S)

Of prime importance is Soviet aid. The first two Soviet-P.D.R.Y. military aid pacts were concluded in February and August 1968, and others have been reached since. Under an agreement signed in 1971, whose value is an estimated US\$10 million, medium tanks, naval craft, light jet bombers, and helicopters are to be provided. Unity talks between the two Yemens in November 1972 were preceded by P.D.R.Y.-U.S.S.R. consultations in Moscow, at which time the Soviets pledged to continue to help strengthen P.D.R.Y. defenses. Since late 1969 the U.S.S.R. has had permission to use storage facilities in Aden, but it has never been allowed to use Aden as a

naval base. The P.D.R.Y. is also a member of the Arab League and the Arab League Collective Security Pact. (S)

I. Historical

The history of the army goes back to World War I, when a battalion of infantry was formed with locally enlisted Arabs to confront Turkish troops threatening the port city of Aden. The unit was disbanded in 1925 but re-formed in 1928 as the Aden Protectorate Levies (APL) under control of the British Royal Air Force. From 1929 through 1939 the APL was utilized for the protection of airfields, for residency guard duty, and for garrison duties on Perim and Kamaran islands. During World War II an antiaircraft unit was temporarily added to the APL, and in 1940 this unit succeeded in shooting down an Italian bomber over Aden. To cope with an increasing number of disturbances in the postwar years, the force was reorganized in 1957 and placed under British Army control. In 1961 the APL came under the jurisdiction of the Federation of South Arabia Government and was redesignated the Federal Regular Army (FRA). By 1964, the FRA comprised five infantry battalions, an armored car squadron, and a signal squadron. In June 1967 four battalions of the Federal Guard (National Guard) were amalgamated with the FRA. Shortly thereafter, a tenth battalion was recruited, and early in 1968 the three battalions of the Hadrami Bedouin Legion, an internal security force in the former Eastern Aden Protectorate, were added to the army. (U) (OU)

Under British tutelage until independence, the army was well trained in mountain warfare tactics, including helicopter-borne operations. Some units also were trained along British lines for urban internal security operations. With Soviet assistance, which began in 1965, the army has expanded to six brigades and continues to improve its capabilities. Since independence it has been effectively combating dissident operations directed from the Y.A.R. and Saudi Arabia. The army's only military setback occurred on 26 November 1969: approximately two of its infantry battalions supported by armored cars crossed into Saudi Arabia and captured the border post at Wuday'ah³ but were repulsed by Saudi armed forces, particularly by the Royal Saudi Air Force. (S)

The P.D.R.Y. Navy was formed in 1966 as the South Arabian Navy, and the United Kingdom agreed to

³For diacritics on place names, see the list of names on the apron of the Summary Map in the Country Profile chapter, and the map itself.

provide three inshore minesweepers as well as naval training and contract officers. With independence in November 1967, the force was redesignated the Southern Yemen Navy and staffed with expatriate contract officers (primarily British) and Arab seamen. The proficiency of the navy declined after the British contract officers were dismissed early in 1968 but has slowly been regained since the U.S.S.R. began in 1970 to provide advisers and Soviet-built vessels. Additional naval aid from the U.S.S.R. is expected in the future. (S)

The P.D.R.Y. Air Force was inaugurated in 1966 and received its first aircraft from the United Kingdom in the latter half of 1967. Virtually all aircrew and administrative staff were British personnel under contract. The radical government dismissed all British contract pilots in February 1968, but the U.K. firm Airwork Ltd. continued to be engaged to perform maintenance. A few pilots from Yugoslavia and other Arab states were hired to fly transport and ground support missions in the fall of 1968. The U.S.S.R.'s influence in the air force began in January 1969 with the delivery of eight MiG-17's and two MiG-15's and the arrival of Soviet advisers and technicians. Four Il-28 jet light bombers were sent during 1972, and additional aircraft deliveries are expected. Syrian pilots and technicians arrived in January 1970, but after a dispute with Yemeni officers departed in July of that same year. Also in 1970 the air force canceled Airwork's maintenance contract, and Airwork personnel were subsequently replaced by Iraqi technicians. (S)

Because of increased Soviet influence and equipment deliveries, the air force now has a fair ground support and transport capability. The air force took no real part in the Wuday'ah border incident against Saudi Arabia in 1969, but it has been employed frequently against dissident forces operating out of the Y.A.R. (S)

The Public Security Force, the primary paramilitary organization, had its origin in the Government Guards which were formed in 1938. With an initial strength of only 100 men, the Government Guards were rapidly expanded as internal security requirements increased. In 1969 the Government Guards came under control of the newly formed Federal Government in 1959 and were merged with the various Tribal Guards of each state to form the Federal Guard. In 1965 this force, totaling 5,000 personnel, was further reorganized. One segment was organized into four mobile battalions which in 1967 were assimilated into the FRA. The remainder assumed the static role of manning upcountry police posts, became amalgamated with

the Aden State Police and the Lahij Police, and eventually came to form the Public Security Force. Overall, the PSF apparently is effective in carrying out its duties as a police force. (C)

The paramilitary Popular Forces were organized in 1970, probably as a substitute for the leftist People's Guard, which was formed after independence from armed members of the National Liberation Front (now the National Front). By March 1968 the People's Guard had a strength of 10,000-11,000. However, after an uprising in Abyan, near Al 'Anad, in May of that year, the more moderate army demanded the disarming and reorganization of the guard, which was reduced in strength to some 400-500 troops. (S)

The idea of having a People's Militia was originally developed after independence with the thought of organizing local defense volunteers, but nothing was done until 1971 when the NF again proposed its formation. Militia units are now being formed throughout the country. (C)

Dissident tribal forces have been using the Y.A.R. as their headquarters for insurgent operations against the P.D.R.Y. since the latter's independence from the British. In October 1971 a P.D.R.Y. force composed of army and paramilitary units and supported by MiG fighters entered the Y.A.R. at Balaq, penetrated 25 miles, and routed approximately 1,200 dissident tribesmen. The encounter demonstrated the P.D.R.Y.'s ability to perform effective coordinated military operations. Also during October 1971, former P.D.R.Y. army commander 'Ali 'Abdullah Maysari was killed by security forces. Maysari may well have been in contact with some military and political leaders from both Yemens with a view toward organizing a coup against the P.D.R.Y. regime. On 21 February 1972, tension between the two Yemens escalated when the Paramount Sheikh of the Khawlan tribe, Naji bin 'Ali al-Ghadir, and some 65 of his followers were killed by P.D.R.Y. forces at Bayhanal Qisab, probably following cross-border operations by the sheikh and his forces. (S)

The Sultanate of Oman has for years been fighting a guerrilla war in Dhofar against insurgents supported by the P.D.R.Y. In May 1972, fighting erupted between Omani air and ground forces and P.D.R.Y. Army, public security, and militia forces at Hawf and at the border fort at Habarut. (S)

Leading the fight for the overthrow of the National Front Government is the Saudi-supported National Unity Front (NUF), a fragile coalition of dissident groups and exiled tribesmen. Formed in 1970, the NUF's effectiveness was usually blocked by its own internal power struggles. Finally in 1972 an ultimatum

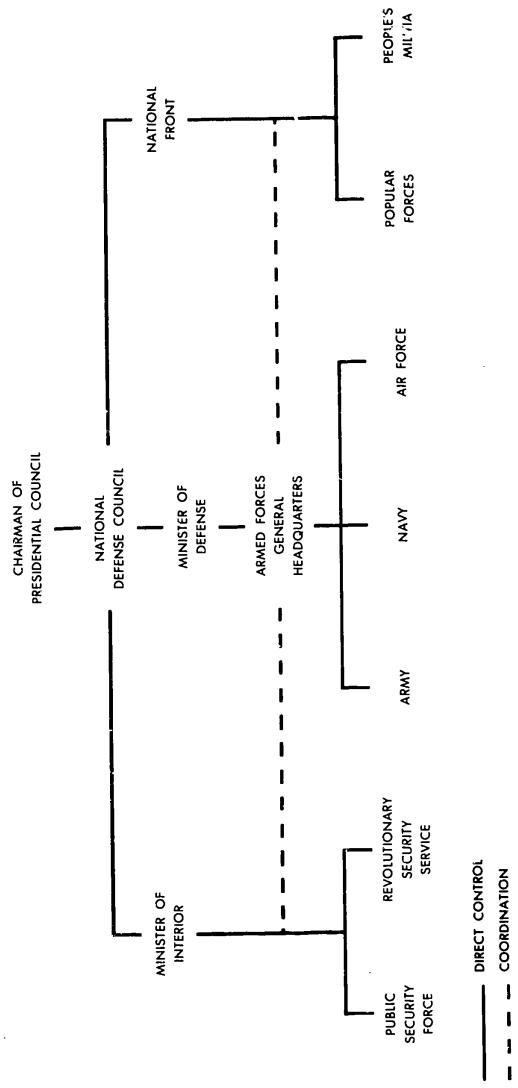


FIGURE 1. Defense Organization (S)

was delivered by Saudi Arabia and by Libya's head of state, Colonel Qadhafi, for the NUF to produce positive results or further aid would cease. Many of the Y.A.R.'s military and civilian officials also agreed that the time was ripe to topple the P.D.R.Y.'s radical regime. Fighting began in the first half of September when dissidents directed attacks into the P.D.R.Y. post of Kirsh using artillery and Saladin armored cars supplied by Libya earlier that summer. Meanwhile, an independent force led by former P.D.R.Y. Armed Forces Commander Husayn 'Ullman 'Ashal crossed into the P.D.R.Y. and attacked positions south of Qa'tabah. (S)

In September 1972, P.D.R.Y. officials became convinced that the attacks were the forerunner of an invasion by combined NUF, tribal, and Y.A.R. regular forces, although at that time, except for supplies received from one army brigade, no official Y.A.R. support had been given. On 26 September, P.D.R.Y. forces using tanks and artillery counterattacked and occupied Qa'tabah. They withdrew shortly after receiving word that Y.A.R. army units were proceeding toward the town. In addition to the 10,000 Y.A.R. army troops already moved to the border area, by the middle of October an estimated 100,000 tribesmen were massed throughout southern Y.A.R. (S)

On 6 October 1972 a number of NUF personnel, aided by the island's inhabitants, seized Kamaran Island with little difficulty. Then, later the same month, tribal, NUF, and Y.A.R. military forces successfully attacked several P.D.R.Y. airfields and border towns. However, the success of these forays was short-lived. Despite a series of cease-fires arranged by the two Yemen prime ministers, P.D.R.Y. armed forces began systematically recovering the territory. Lack of any control over the regular, dissident, and tribal forces from the north, plus the rapid depletion of ammunition and spare parts, caused the poorly planned invasion to fail by October. An agreement was reached the same month by the two Yemens to work toward unity within a year. By 30 December the P.D.R.Y. Army had completed the withdrawal of military concentrations from inside Y.A.R. territory, the border was reopened, and some semblance of peace was being maintained. (S)

2. Command structure (S)

Defense policy decisions are the responsibility of the National Defense Council, which is headed by the Chairman of the Presidential Council and includes the Secretary General of the National Front, the Prime Minister, the Defense Minister, and the Interior

Minister. As of early 1973 the Prime Minister, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad Hasani, was also Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Commander in Chief. Military policy is carried out by the Ministry of Defense and its subordinate Armed Forces General Headquarters at Abu 'Ubaydah Military Headquarters near Aden. The top intelligence body within the Ministry of Defense is the Military Intelligence Committee, which includes the army chief of staff, the chief of operations, intelligence coordinators, the chief of the Military Intelligence Service, and the director of the Public Security Force. Military operations are controlled by the Deputy Defense Minister and Army Commander, Lt. Col. 'Ali Nasir al-Bishi, alias 'Ali 'Antaz. In reality, the general staff is the same for both armed forces and army headquarters.

In March 1971 the National Defense Council decided to form popular defense councils throughout the P.D.R.Y. to "take part in the country's defense and to oppose plans being engineered against the country." The local councils appear to be primarily intended for paramilitary organizations. Paramilitary forces include the Public Security Force and the Revolutionary Security Service, which are controlled by the Minister of Interior, and the Popular Forces and People's Militia, which appear to be under the guidance of the National Front.

When operating with other forces, the army assumes operational control of paramilitary units. There are no conflicts over the chain of command, with each force acting in concert with its counterparts (Figure 1).

B. Joint activities

1. Military manpower

As of 1 July 1973 the P.D.R.Y. had about 377,000 males in the ages 15-49, of whom about 55% were physically fit for military service. Available manpower by 5-year age groupings is shown in the following tabulation: (U/OU)

Age	TOTAL MALES	MAXIMUM NUMBER FIT FOR MILITARY SERVICE
15-19	79,000	45,000
20-24	70,000	40,000
25-29	61,000	35,000
30-34	53,000	30,000
35-39	45,000	25,000
40-44	38,000	15,000
45-49	31,000	15,000
Total, 15-49	377,000	205,000

The average number of males reaching military age (18) annually between 1973 and 1977 will be

approximately 15,000. Until at least the end of 1969 there was no conscription system in the armed forces. However, in May 1971 Minister of Interior Salih Muti said the government was "accepting draftees into the national armed forces to give them a chance to carry their responsibilities of rule within the framework of a single national front." The age limit for draftees is not known, but personnel who are recruited are between 18 and 26 years old. There is no reserve system. Additional personnel to be mobilized would have to come from the paramilitary Popular Forces and People's Militia. (C)

Although almost 90% are illiterate, military personnel display a military aptitude because of their lifelong environmental association with rudimentary firearms and the terrain in which the army operates. The citizens in and around the former British crown colony of Aden have developed a familiarity with machines which is not found in most of the Arabian Peninsula, and these skills has carried over to the benefit of the armed forces. Military personnel have demonstrated an excellent aptitude for improvisation with resources available to them. There is no indication that P.D.R.Y. troops have experienced undue difficulty with Soviet training techniques. (S)

Throughout the stormy upheavals which followed independence, the armed forces have remained loyal to the regime. While tribal and regional antagonisms remain, the major disruptive factor in the armed forces has been the factionalism between supporters of the state's two leading political rivals, Presidential Council Chairman Salim Rubay'i 'Ali and National Front Secretary General 'Abd al-Fattah Isma'il. The armed forces in general owe their loyalty to President 'Ali, but there are areas of strength which support Isma'il. Nearly half of the air force is of northern (i.e., Yemen-Arab Republic) origin and are more loyal to Isma'il, himself a northerner. Interlinked with this rivalry is tension between pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese groups; Isma'il is a proponent of the former while President 'Ali favors the latter. (S)

Although there have been instances of sympathy with the dissidents, such as pilots deliberately dropping their bombs wide of the target and desertions occurring periodically, the armed forces appear quite capable of keeping their troops under control. Morale has generally been good following confrontations against dissident forces. Members of tribes which are suspect are left out of NF governmental, or military positions of importance. One area of dissatisfaction has been some of the economic policies of the regime. For example, units of the armed forces were asked in 1970 and again in 1971 to give up 1 day's salary for

the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf, and for the Palestinian revolutionaries. (S)

2. Strength trends (S)

The strength of the armed forces (excluding militia and intelligence units) has slowly increased since independence (Figure 2). A temporary drop in army strength from 9,000 to about 7,500 took place late in 1967 following the purge and defection of many troops of 'Anbaji tribal background, but the integration of the 1,500-man Hadrami Bedouin Legion into the army early the following year restabilized its strength at 9,000. The army has made small gains in size since then and should continue this trend. Naval and air force strengths will probably increase significantly, as expected arms deliveries arrive from the U.S.S.R.

Paramilitary strength has fluctuated greatly. The Public Security Force has remained static at 5,000 men. The People's Guard, the forerunner of the Popular Forces, was estimated at 10,000 to 11,000 men by 1968, but it was subsequently disarmed and reorganized. During 1971 and 1972 both the Popular Forces and the People's Militia were expanded and may be approaching planned strengths.

3. Training (S)

Armed forces training has increased significantly since the first Soviet weapons were introduced in 1968. The Soviet Military Advisory Group, the principal military advisers to the armed forces, is headquartered in Aden and commanded by a major general. Training courses are conducted both in the P.D.R.Y. and in foreign countries, primarily the U.S.S.R. In 1971 and 1972 an increasing number of armed forces trainees were sent to and returned from the U.S.S.R. The Soviet mission became quite distressed in 1971 over the arrival in Yemen (Aden) in 1971 of eight army and eight air force advisers from the People's Republic of

FIGURE 2. Personnel strengths of the armed forces (S)

YEAR	ARMY	NAVY	AIR FORCE	TOTAL
1967.....	9,000	35	*0	9,035
1968.....	9,000	50	*0	9,050
1969.....	9,000	59	65	9,115
1970.....	8,000	190	120	8,310
1971.....	10,000	190	140	10,330
1972.....	12,000	300	295	12,595

*The air force was dependent on foreign contract personnel during 1967 and 1968.

China. Faced with this rival threat, the Soviet mission apparently forced the P.D.R.Y. Government to send the Chinese military advisers home.

Several other countries, such as Iraq and Syria, have provided training to the armed forces on a much smaller scale. Six P.D.R.Y. military officers were expelled from the Sudanese Military Academy in June 1971, apparently for political reasons; none have returned. East Germany may also be conducting some military training in addition to its training of P.D.R.Y. security forces.

Most in-country training is conducted at Aden, although units also train in the field. The armed forces have conducted joint training exercises during 1971 and 1972. In addition, the army has frequently provided training to paramilitary forces.

Political indoctrination is one aspect of training that has been receiving increasing emphasis throughout the armed forces. In March 1971, the post of Deputy Minister of Defense for Moral and Political Guidance was created, thus reflecting the extent of the government's concern for the "political enlightenment" of the armed forces.

Based on effectiveness of the various components in actual combat operations, army training seems to be effective, while naval and air force training needs improvement. This is especially true for the air force because of its higher technical requirements. Soviet advisory assistance to all three services is expected to increase.

4. Military budget (C)

The budget for the regular armed forces of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (P.D.R.Y.) is prepared by the finance office of the Ministry of Defense, and estimates of expenditures for the Public Security Force are formulated within the Ministry of Interior. After review and coordination, these budgets are combined to form the defense budget, which is then presented to the Ministry of Finance and incorporated into the national budget. The Executive Committee reviews the national budget and, following approval, passes it on to the National Front Command, which in practice merely approves it as presented. Annual defense budgets for fiscal years 1967 through 1974 are shown below. Information is not available on the formulation or amounts budgeted for the Revolutionary Security Service, Popular Forces, or People's Militia.

	P.D.R.Y. DEFENSE BUDGETS (Millions of U.S. dollars)				
	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Defense budget	29.7	30.1	21.2	19.6	15.8
Defense budget as a percent of national budget	40.8	49.0	55.2	52.9	34.4

5. Logistics

The paucity of natural resources and technological skills in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen precludes all but marginal economic support for the country's armed forces. The loss of British budget support and troop expenditures, combined with the decrease in bunkering activity at the port of Aden because of the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967, has resulted in a considerable decline in national income. In addition, the defense budgets have consistently accounted for a large portion of the total national budget, absorbing funds needed for economic development (C)

The P.D.R.Y. is totally dependent on foreign sources for military materiel. Prior to independence in November 1967, the country relied exclusively on the United Kingdom for armed forces equipment and training. Since then, several military aid agreements, valued at a total of \$27 million, have been concluded with the Soviet Union. Equipment provided by the U.S.S.R. has included infantry weapons, artillery, armored vehicles, trucks, landing craft, submarine chasers, helicopters, and aircraft, including 18 fighters and 5 transports. Lesser amounts of ground forces materiel have been supplied by Algeria, East Germany, Hungary, Iraq, and China. (S)

Military equipment routinely arrives at the port of Aden in merchant vessels. There was a significant increase in Soviet military transport flights to Aden in the fall of 1972, during the hostilities with the Y.A.R. This is indicative of the importance the Soviet Union attaches to its military support of and presence in the P.D.R.Y. (S)

Aden is the primary storage depot for military equipment and supplies, which are transported by ground and air to units throughout the country as needed. Paramilitary forces receive logistic support from the regular armed forces. Despite the relative unsophistication of logistics, no major breakdowns are known to have occurred. When weapons or supplies are needed for specific combat missions in other parts of the country, they are sent without undue delay. As an example, in May 1972 ammunition was flown from Aden into the airfield at Al Ghaydah for use against Omani forces. (S)

C. Army (S)

Organized in its present form early in 1968, the P.D.R.Y. Army is the preeminent military force in the country. Its primary missions are to maintain internal security and defend the nation's boundaries against

foreign aggression. In its short but stormy history, the army has demonstrated its capability to preserve the *status quo*.

Although no match against a major power, the army has proven itself capable of conducting limited military operations into Y.A.R. territory, and during the attempted invasion in the fall of 1972 it was able to repel the Yemeni force of army regulars, tribal mercenaries, and National Unity Front forces. The army is well trained for the Arabian Peninsula, has an effective logistics system, and is mobile enough to deploy rapidly to troubled areas. It also has conducted well-planned joint operations with air and paramilitary forces and has advantageously utilized an effective intelligence system based on both human and technical resources.

Much of the credit for this effectiveness must be given to the U.S.S.R., which has provided advisers and most of the equipment. In addition to the advisers stationed in the country, Soviet military delegations have visited the P.D.R.Y. and inspected army brigades.

The army's greatest weakness lies in the threat of internal conflict over political and tribal differences. The political quarrel between Chairman 'Ali, who has pro-Chinese leanings, and National Front Secretary General Isma'il, who supports the U.S.S.R., has penetrated the army. Several times during 1972, the army refused to carry out orders from the National Front. In early 1972 Chairman 'Ali abolished the Republican Guard, a force of regular army troops on special duty, because he had evidence that a large proportion of its officers were of northern Yemeni origin and loyal to his rival, Isma'il, a northerner. It appears that many army officers are slowly turning against Isma'il because of his pro-Soviet leanings and his northern regional ties. Another source of friction in the army is the varied tribal makeup of its members. The army has on several occasions been on the verge of open internal conflict, but each time it has managed to maintain its integrity. As long as it remains a cohesive unit, it should be an effective force in southern Arabia.

1. Organization

The Armed Forces General Headquarters at Abu 'Ubaydah also functions as the Army General Headquarters, with army personnel serving in both roles. The commander of the army, called the Land Forces, additionally serves as Deputy Defense Minister; he is subordinate to the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, who is also concurrently Prime Minister and Minister of Defense.

The general staff, which appears to be quite small, includes a chief of staff and a deputy chief of general staff, with additional positions for operations, intelligence, training, supplies, and administration. The armored corps commander and artillery corps commander also are on the general staff. The deputy chief of staff for intelligence supervises the Military Intelligence Service, which is responsible for military information collection, military security, and control of insurgency.

The Army General Headquarters directly controls the six brigades, which are the primary tactical units. Although each regional governor may have some degree of control over, or at least coordination with, the military units within his jurisdiction, all military orders are issued from Abu 'Ubaydah in the name of the army command.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition¹

Strength of the army is approximately 12,000 men organized into six infantry brigades of three battalions each. Brigade strengths, which also include support unit personnel, vary between 1,200 and 1,600 men; battalion strengths usually are between 300 and 500. Each battalion has three companies. In addition to the brigades, the army also includes a signal battalion, a training battalion, a military academy, a military police unit, a number of armored and artillery units, and support units. Army brigades are located throughout the country, with troop concentration in the cities of Aden, Bayhan al Qisab, Mukayris, Al 'Anad, Al 'Abr, and Al Mukalla. Each brigade is responsible for conducting military operations in its respective region. As an example, the 30th Brigade's area of responsibility is the outlying Fifth and Sixth governorates; however, the army's degree of effective control is considerably less in these far easterly governorates than in those areas closer to the seat of power. Battalions are periodically rotated from one governorate (and one brigade) to another. During the Yemeni hostilities in the fall of 1972, battalions were rapidly deployed to the northern borders of the Second, Third, and Fourth Governorates. Armored and artillery unit integrity is usually not maintained. Although there are detachments throughout the country, such as the artillery detachment on the island of Socotra, most armor and artillery are allocated by the army command to battalions as needed.

¹For current detailed information see the *Military Intelligence Summary* and the *Order of Battle Summary, Foreign Ground Forces*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

All army units are equipped with Soviet weapons. Major items of military equipment include T-34 and T-54 medium tanks, BTR-40 and BTR-152 armored personnel carriers, BRDM-2 armored reconnaissance vehicles, anti-aircraft artillery, and 75-mm, 85-mm, and 122-mm artillery guns. Equipment remaining from the British days before 1958, such as Ferret Scout cars and 25-pounder artillery, is almost certainly unserviceable by now.

In February 1972, the P.D.R.Y. received a shipment of howitzers, machineguns, armored cars, and motorcycles from East Germany. That same year an agreement was concluded with Hungary for an unknown amount of ground equipment; as of July 1972, 12 artillery pieces had been delivered. Of the other Arab countries, only Iraq and Algeria have provided military materiel to the P.D.R.Y. Iraqi deliveries primarily included small arms and ammunition. In the spring of 1968, Yemen (Aden) received a large shipment of arms and ammunition as a gift from Algeria.

3. Training

The army's training program is under the supervision of Soviet advisers both in the country and in the U.S.S.R. Virtually all formal in-country training is conducted at Salahudin camp in the vicinity of Little Aden. With the introduction of Soviet infantry weapons in mid-1968 and artillery and armor in 1969, training in 85-mm artillery, T-34 medium tanks, and other weapons was initiated. By March 1969, at least 20 Soviet instructors were present at the training center, and one army battalion had completed training in Soviet weapons systems. There are at least 75 Soviet military advisers with the army. Each brigade has a Soviet adviser and translator assigned. Of the others, approximately 25 advisers are assigned to Salahudin Camp, five are with the Soviet Military Mission headquarters, and the rest visit outlying units as required. Very few of the Soviets travel to units in the eastern border areas. Advisers previously were attached to battalions, but it appears that they now are associated with a battalion only when the unit is in training.

On 1 September 1971 Presidential Council Chairman 'Ali opened the military academy at Salahudin camp. The course of instruction was to be divided into three fields: theoretical studies, tactical and applied studies, and a course to develop specialties in such areas as artillery and armor. The period of study at the academy was to be 2 years, with the graduates being awarded the rank of lieutenant and placed in command of military units.

However, the first group of army officers graduated from the military academy just 1 year later, in September 1972. The early graduation is probably indicative of the need for officers.

In addition to the strong Soviet influence on the domestic training program there may be a small number of Iraqi advisers working with artillery and armor units. Eight Chinese army officers arrived in February 1971, but shortly after, the Soviet military mission, fearful of Chinese inroads into the armed forces, persuaded the P.D.R.Y. Government to send them back home.

External training for the army is also heavily dominated by the U.S.S.R. Trainees from each brigade are sent to the U.S.S.R., and a large number of army trainees returned from there in July 1972. The curriculum offered is not known, but courses are given in general military studies as well as in specialized and technical fields. Iraq provides limited army training.

The military training program includes the study of Marxist doctrine. Every battalion has in its ranks a number of ideologically trained men who have undergone political training by NF cadres. Units known as *Sariyyat al-Istilla'* (Reconnaissance Companies) apparently exist with the primary duty of keeping the brigades ideologically motivated.

Overall, the training program is marginal by Western or Soviet standards. Yemen (Aden) has the same major problem as the other states in the Arabian Peninsula: a lack of trainable manpower with the requisite educational background. Training is further hampered by the tendency to cut corners, as well as by the propensity to put as much emphasis on political indoctrination as on military subjects. Nevertheless, the training program has served as a basis to insure that the army can effectively counter tribal and regular forces from the Y.A.R.

4. Logistics

Despite considerable strain imposed by combat operations, no serious breakdown in the army logistical system is known to have occurred. Although the British military influence and assistance was replaced by that of the Soviet Union beginning in 1968, much of the army's logistical system has apparently remained unchanged.

The army's supply system is quite rudimentary, with little administrative documentation. Although this system may have resulted in misappropriation of some government stores, no serious shortages of arms, ammunition, or rations have been noted. Virtually all

logistical facilities are located in the Aden/Little Aden complex. The chief storage point for weapons and ammunition received through foreign assistance programs is the ammunition depot at Jabal Hadid, while other imported and local purchase items are stockpiled at the supply depot near Ra's al Jarih. A transportation unit at Abu 'Ubaydah is charged with the shipment of all freight to outlying units by road or air. Fresh produce and other rationed items, primarily goats and other livestock, are consigned to a supply unit, also at Abu 'Ubaydah, which allocates them to the transportation section for shipment to upcountry units. A 5-year stock level of ammunition is reportedly maintained, but periodic shortages occur in other supplies. POL requirements are drawn from the Yemeni National Oil Company in Aden/Little Aden. Most of the oil for army units is shipped via road tankers.

Maintenance workshops are located at Abu 'Ubaydah and in the area just north of Ra's al Jarih. Small workshop detachments, with vehicle-recovery teams, are assigned to various brigade headquarters. Although instrument maintenance is weak, mechanics are generally experienced in vehicle repair.

Personnel of the engineer unit receive training in roadbuilding, mine-laying and detection, demolition, water pumping, and minor construction work. The unit's effectiveness is limited, however, by a shortage of equipment and vehicles.

D. Navy

The mission of the navy is to safeguard the coastal waters and islands of the republic; however, it has an extremely limited combat capability. Because of the small size of the navy's nine vessels, the force is restricted to the patrol of coastal waters. Occasional voyages to Perim Island and, until its annexation by the Y.A.R., Kamaran Island have been made for the purpose of transporting military supplies. Naval craft have also delivered military supplies to P.D.R.Y. Army units facing the Omani border. (C)

The navy has not experienced combat. Until the arrival of two submarine chasers from the U.S.S.R. in 1972, the largest weapon on board any vessel was a 40-mm gun. The SO.1-class small submarine chasers (Figure 3), if fully armed, would be equipped with four 25-mm guns, rocket launchers, and depth charges. (C)

A deficiency in the navy is the lack of expertise among its personnel. With the dismissal of British contract officers in 1968, dhow captains were drafted into the navy. Furthermore, army officers with little experience in naval matters have often been transferred to the navy. (C)

The navy is completely dependent on the U.S.S.R. for advisory assistance and supplies. Under Soviet direction, increased emphasis has been placed on the training of personnel and the procurement of ships

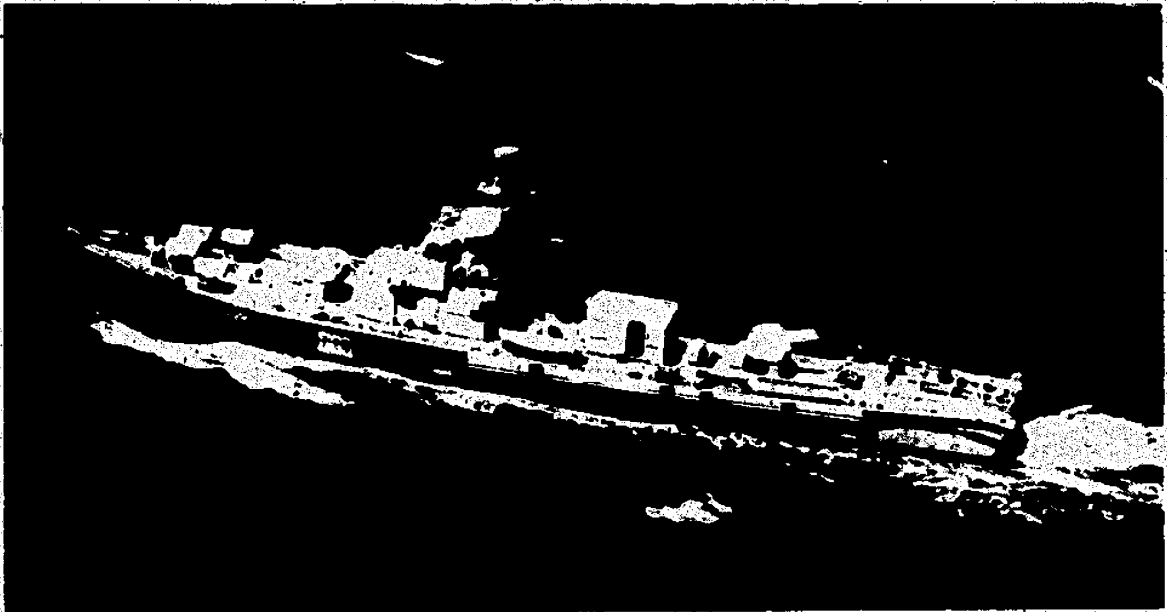


FIGURE 3. Soviet SO.1-class small submarine chaser en route to Aden in 1972 (C)

and equipment. Since the fall of 1969, the Soviet Union has had permission to use storage facilities in Aden, but permission has never been granted for the U.S.S.R. to use Aden as a naval base. Further expansion of the navy is expected, but it will continue to remain the least important of the regular forces. (S)

1. Organization (C)

The navy is under the control of Armed Forces General Headquarters. Navy Forces Command is headquartered at At Tawahi Naval Base in the port of Aden (Figure 4). The entire fleet is based at Aden. Because of its small size there appears to be no breakdown into operational commands or naval districts.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition⁵ (S)

The entire navy of Yemen (Aden) consists of 13 small vessels: two submarine chasers, three inshore minesweepers, seven landing craft, and one fireboat.

In 1967 three former British Royal Navy Hansclass inshore minesweepers were overhauled and transferred to the newly independent People's Republic of South Yemen, which uses them as motor gunboats. The other 10 vessels have been provided by the U.S.S.R. Three Soviet T-4 class mechanized landing craft (LCM) and one Pozharnyy-1 class small fireboat were delivered

⁵For current information on strength, composition, and disposition, see the *Military Intelligence Summary* and the *Automated Naval Order of Battle*, both published by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

during November-December 1970. Four additional landing craft of unknown type were delivered by the Soviets in early 1972. The latest ship delivery occurred in April 1972 when two standard SO.4-class small submarine chasers were towed to Aden from the Black Sea. These vessels are believed to be part of an arms agreement signed in Moscow in October 1971. All craft are based at Aden, with only occasional patrols along the coastline to Al Mukalla or Perim Island, both of which could be used as temporary operating bases. In March 1972, construction was underway on an expansion of the facilities at Al Mukalla, probably in an attempt to extend the naval arm to the two outlying eastern governorates.

Navy strength is now estimated at between 250 and 300 men, almost all of them assigned to At Tawahi Naval Base. The proportion of personnel serving ashore and afloat is unknown, although if the standard complement for each vessel is combined, the total crews needed would be approximately 135 officers and seamen.

3. Training (S)

As with the other services, the P.D.R.Y.'s expanding naval training program is dependent on Soviet support and advisers. Only over the past several years have serious attempts been made to initiate an effective naval training program in the P.D.R.Y. In addition to British contract officers, most of the few British-trained seamen in Aden were also released in 1968. In 1969 some training was conducted in India, and also



FIGURE 4. At Tawahi Naval Base, Aden, with two small submarine chasers in the foreground (S)

by the U.A.R. in Aden, but training by both countries has ceased.

Since 1969, naval personnel have traveled to the U.S.S.R. to attend seamanship courses. Most trainees have been recruited directly from school, while the remainder have been active-duty personnel. Much of the training is geared toward developing an officer corps. The selectees are told that successful candidates will be promoted to officer rank upon their return. Soviet advisers and technicians first arrived in the P.D.R.Y. in 1970 to assist the navy. A school for the training of naval specialists was scheduled to open in Aden in March 1972; five Soviet instructors were programed to assist in training up to 300 students.

There is no information on any on-the-job training that may exist, but it is assumed that the Soviets have initiated such a program. In December of each year, maneuvers are conducted by the navy at the completion of their yearly program.

The overall quality of the training program is difficult to assess. The Soviets are without doubt experiencing the same frustrations experienced by those engaged in other naval training programs throughout the Middle East, such as the low educational level of the average sailor, bureaucratic red tape, and large amounts of money required to get results. On the positive side, the navy's apparent operational ability gives credit to its training program.

4. Logistics (S)

The navy is capable of maintaining its small force with assistance from Soviet advisory personnel. The two National Shipyards Company yards in the Aden port area can perform hull, machinery, and floating repairs to naval vessels. Supplies and equipment are procured through the Ministry of Defense. All engines, replacement parts, and other ship components must be imported. The U.S.S.R. is the prime supplier, thus

helping to insure an adequate maintenance program for the Soviet-delivered vessels. The three former British inshore minesweepers are probably in poor condition, however, with their radar and other electronics cooperative.

E. Air Force (S)

The P.D.R.Y. Air Force has expanded rapidly since receipt of its first aircraft in 1967. It is charged with defending the country's airspace, providing tactical support for its ground forces, and transporting men and materiel. During 1971 and 1972 the air force, with Soviet support, substantially improved its capabilities and combat readiness. Although relatively small, it is now large enough to be a threat to the Yemen Arab Republic and the Sultanate of Oman, as well as to cause additional concern to Saudi Arabia. The delivery of eight Frecos (MiG-17's) to Yemen (Aden) in November 1971 doubled the operational strength of its MiG squadron. These aircraft were part of an arms agreement with Moscow in April of that year. Since that time helicopters and four jet bombers have been received from the Soviets, and additional deliveries are probable.

Fighter aircraft have been successfully used in a ground attack role in conjunction with army units in border areas adjacent to Oman and Yemen. In the past, two MiG-17's and four BAC-167's have been standing alert to make air strikes against dissident forces (Figure 5). However, forward ground control techniques have not been developed. Pilots are briefed prior to takeoff. Once in the air, further target information is not received and there is no coordination with ground forces, frequently leading to less than satisfactory results. The delivery in 1972 of Mi-8 (HIP) and Ka-26 (HOONUM) helicopters demonstrates a developing interest in heliborne



FIGURE 5. People's Democratic Republic of Yemen Air Force BAC-167 Strikemaster (U/OU)

operations. The arrival during the same year of four Il-28 (Beagle) jet bombers will mean a significant increase in offensive capability when P.D.R.Y. crews become proficient in using these aircraft. Launched from Khormaksar, the Il-28's could bomb Sa'ifa' and return, or reach Salalah in Oman and recover at one of the P.D.R.Y.'s eastern airfields.

With Soviet advice, the transport fleet has provided valuable service to army units through its delivery of supplies and ammunition.

The air force's weakest link is its poor air defense capability. Two radar officers who had completed training courses in Moscow were appointed to form the nucleus of a radar section in July 1971. Mobile radar units of an unknown type have been deployed to Baylan, Ataq, and Al Ghural airfields; but no integrated air defense system exists.

All training is under Soviet supervision. Proficiency is hindered because the officer corps is appointed more for its political reliability than its combat potential. In addition to their advisory status, the Soviets fly the An-24 transports. They have not, however, flown operational missions against the Y.A.R. or dissident forces. The air force should become more proficient as Soviet training continues.

I. Organization

The center of virtually all air force activities is Aden/Khormaksar airfield, which is also the P.D.R.Y.'s chief commercial airport. The present air force organization was drawn up according to recommendations prepared in 1969 by Soviet advisers attached to the P.D.R.Y. Ministry of Defense. It includes an air force commander and headquarters, a MiG-17 fighter/bomber squadron, a Jet Provost attack/training squadron, a transport squadron, an air base maintenance battalion, aircraft repair workshops, and a training center. This establishment was designed to serve as a base for expansion after the training of personnel and arrival of new aircraft and equipment. A bomber squadron has been formed following the delivery of four Il-28 light bombers in June 1972, but as of early 1973 the unit was probably not operational because of the lack of qualified pilots.

Air force headquarters is located at Shahid Badr camp, Khormaksar. The air force commander reports directly to the Armed Forces General Headquarters in Aden. His headquarters staff is quite small, including in addition to the unit commanders an adjutant, an operations officer, an administrative officer, an armaments officer, a housing and supplies officer, a technical stores officer, a security officer, and a limited number of noncommissioned officers and enlisted personnel.

During combat operations a Tactical Air Force Command is established, with tactical commands set up at Ataq and Riyan airfields, the two major fields used for deployment of tactical aircraft. The Army Command at Abu 'Ubaydah frequently requests the head of the tactical command at Ataq or Riyan airfields to carry out specified missions in addition to those laid on by the air force commander. This again illustrates the dominance of the army in the service structure. Coordination of tasks with the other services is a function of the Armed Forces General Headquarters.

2. Strength, composition, and disposition

The air force has expanded rapidly in both aircraft and personnel since mid-'968. There are 52 aircraft of Soviet and British origin: 4 bombers, 14 fighter-bombers, 4 attack aircraft, 8 transports, 12 helicopters, 6 trainers, and 4 utility aircraft. However, not all of these aircraft are in operational units.

The Fifth Fighter/Bomber Squadron has 13 MiG-17 Finesco and one MiG-15 Foxor jet aircraft. The personnel positions in the squadron include the commander, deputy commander, adjutant, operations officer, training officer, and maintenance officer. The organization of the other squadrons is probably similar. The attack/training squadron comprises four BAC-167 and six Jet Provosts left over from British days. The transport squadron consists of five An-24 and two C-47 light transports, four Mi-8 transport helicopters, two Ka-26 utility helicopters, and two Beaver light utility aircraft. Of the four Il-28 light bombers, two are the training version (U-11-28/Mascot) and two are of the operational version (Beagle). The bomber squadron should become combat ready when the initial aircrews are trained. An Il-28 aircrew comprises a pilot, a navigator, and a gunner. As of December 1972, pilots were being trained in Yemen (Aden) and the U.S.S.R.

As of December, 1972, at least 235 personnel were assigned to the air force, approximately 20 of them pilots. There also are several pilots in service from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) who hold Iraqi passports, and at least one Syrian pilot, all flying with the MiG squadron. Because of the lack of qualified pilots, the air force is making a concerted effort to increase their number. Despite Soviet training programs, the air force is restricted by a severe shortage of qualified personnel in all ranks.

The National Front has appointed leading members of its organization to key positions in the air force. The air force commander, Maj. Ahmad Salim 'Ubayd, has had no military training but is a member of the NF General Command and holds the position of chairman

of the People' Court. During 1972 several pilots were arrested for political reasons, and new pilots are generally members of the ruling National Front. However, because of internal power struggles, their political loyalty to the NF regime will always remain partly in question despite formal party membership.

Although all aircraft are based at Khormaksar, the P.D.R.Y. 3-year development plan (1972-74) provides for the improvement of a number of airfields. Riyan is the only other field with a hard-surface runway. It and another provincial airfield, 'Ataq, are now used for military transport flights and as forward fighter bases during hostilities. Presently all aircraft return to Khormaksar at the end of each day's activities, but the airstrip at 'Ataq may be modified for use as a second Central Military Landing Ground to supplement the Khormaksar base. Many of the numerous other airstrips are used regularly. Two MiG-17's have been based for short periods as far east as Al Ghaydah in the Sixth Governorate, to be used against Omani forces operating out of Salalah.

3. Training

The U.S.S.R. has overall responsibility for training P.D.R.Y. Air Force personnel. Even before the introduction in 1972 of Soviet bombers and helicopters into the P.D.R.Y. Air Force, there were at least 65 Soviet air advisers, of whom 30 were with the MiG squadron and 25-30 with the An-24's. The arrival of additional aircraft must have brought with it a corresponding increase in advisory assistance.

A meaningful training program was not inaugurated until early 1969. Fifty air force personnel began undergoing initial training in the U.S.S.R. in April of that year, receiving instruction in aircraft maintenance and pilot training. Training in both Yemen (Aden) and the U.S.S.R. is now given in almost all air force specialties, including such diverse topics as airport administration and radar maintenance. Even under Soviet supervision, however, training within Yemen (Aden) is often haphazard and not particularly effective. Nevertheless, the threat of war with the Y.A.R. in 1971 and 1972 signaled increased emphasis on training. Flight training at Khormaksar in MiG's and in jet Provosts and BAC-167's is conducted each morning by P.D.R.Y. pilots in a routine similar to that used by the United States—including practice in dogfights, formation flying, and attacks against ground targets. Ground attack training missions are carried out in deserted areas of the Second Governorate, using machineguns, rockets, and bombs. Proficiency is still limited primarily to visual flying. There is no night flying and only minimal experience

in instrument flying. In-country training is also accomplished on transports, helicopters and, beginning in the second half of 1972, Il-28 bombers.

Most if not all P.D.R.Y. pilots, as well as a number of nonflying officers and technicians, have been to the U.S.S.R. for training. Upon completion of a training program which lasts up to 2 years, the pilots return to the P.D.R.Y. as second lieutenants. Approximately 60 air force personnel returned from Moscow in September 1971, and another large group returned in July 1972. In addition, a small number of air force personnel may also have attended courses in the past in Iraq and at the military academy in Syria.

As the air force's professional proficiency has increased, there has been a corresponding increase in morale. However, there appears to be as much emphasis on political indoctrination as on academic and technical subjects. Other problems have arisen. In June 1972, two pilots were killed, and a third who was the training officer for the MiG squadron was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment for refusing to fly a training mission after complaining that he was flying too many hours and that the aircraft were not receiving proper maintenance.

4. Logistics

The P.D.R.Y. Air Force is totally dependent on foreign sources, primarily Soviet, for aircraft, spare parts, and maintenance assistance. With this assistance, maintenance is fairly proficient, being superior to that of the Yemen Arab Republic but not up to the level of Saudi Arabia. All major maintenance and logistic facilities are concentrated at Khormaksar airfield. An air force maintenance battalion at Khormaksar maintains the aircraft. Subordinate units include an airfield technical support company, a security company, and aircraft maintenance and supply support units. The TO&E for the battalion is 173 personnel, but despite training programs at home and in the U.S.S.R., the unit is short of manpower. Maintenance functions are augmented by Soviet technicians for the Soviet-built aircraft. The Soviet organization *Aziarkspost*, which has some 35-40 personnel in the P.D.R.Y., is responsible for flying and servicing the five An-24's. Other Soviet military technicians maintain the MiG fighters, the Il-28's, and presumably the Soviet-delivered helicopters. An Iraqi team arrived in July 1970 to replace Airwork Ltd., the contract British firm that had been servicing the P.D.R.Y.'s U.K.-supplied aircraft. This team was expelled in July 1971 because of "personal behavior in the domestic field," but a new Iraqi team replaced them that fall. The DC-3's and Beaver aircraft are

maintained under contract by the civilian airlines, YAMDA, or Democratic Yemen Airlines, (which prior to its nationalization was called BASCO).

Air force technicians are trained by their Soviet and Iraqi counterparts. A group of technicians, including radar and armaments specialists and electrical engineers, returned from the U.S.S.R. in August 1971. All were appointed second lieutenants. Additional technicians have subsequently received training both on the job and in formal courses.

Most air force aircraft, supplies, and equipment are delivered from the U.S.S.R. via cargo aircraft or ships. POL products are received from the British Petroleum Refinery at Little Aden and from the Yemeni National Oil Company. A railroad spur line carrying diesel oil from the refinery serves the airfield at Khormaksar.

F. Paramilitary (S)

The P.D.R.Y. has several paramilitary and intelligence or militia organizations designed to "guard and defend the revolution and the homeland." These organizations include the Public Security Force, the Revolutionary Security Service, Popular Forces, and the People's Militia. Each frequently cooperates with the others and with the army against insurgent forces.

The Minister of Interior controls the Public Security Force and the Revolutionary Security Service. For command and control purposes, each governorate requires local commanders to report to a regional directorate which is subordinate to the Governorate Security Headquarters. At this level each governorate may have a staff coordinating security matters. Each Governorate Security Headquarters reports to the Governorates' Security Headquarters in Aden, which is responsible to the Ministry of Interior.

The National Front political organization apparently controls the Popular Forces and the People's Militia. Locally, both organizations have membership in the popular defense councils. There is no information available as to their chain of command at the regional level and above or as to the Minister of Interior's degree of control over these forces.

An East German team of up to 40 men advises and trains the Ministry of Interior police and security forces. In addition to regular courses of study, the team has been responsible for ideological courses, on which the P.D.R.Y. authorities place great importance. P.D.R.Y. security personnel have also gone to East Germany for training. In late 1971 two Egyptian police officers, both of whom were majors from General Investigations in Cairo, arrived to take charge of a police training course at the Fatah camp in the P.D.R.Y. Their present status is unknown.

Other instruction takes place at the Revolutionary School in Al Mukalla, but this training may be limited to the Popular Forces or the People's Militia. About 100 persons attend the school; studies include rifle training. The army conducts a number of courses in Aden, including signals and weapons training. Brigades throughout the country also provide field training.

1. Public Security Force

The 5,000-man Public Security Force (PSF) is responsible for domestic security and routine police matters and assists the armed forces in the maintenance of internal security. It is organized into three divisions: the Armed Police, who are responsible for riot duties and security; the Rural Police, who maintain over 200 outposts in the outlying provinces; and the First Governorate (Aden) Urban Police. The Armed Police Command at Aden has armed police battalions stationed near military installations and towns, apparently in anticipation of possible attacks by dissidents. There are Public Security Headquarters in some of the larger cities throughout the country. These probably supervise the operations of the Rural Police outposts, coordinate area security matters, and report to or actually be the directorate headquarters in each governorate. No details are available on the personnel strengths of the public security outposts, but they are believed to be much smaller than company size. Public security units were referred to by number until at least 1970, but such information has not since been available.

Overall, the PSF apparently is effective, although this is the result of a policy of overkill rather than of any developed efficiency or professionalism—of which there appears to be a general lack. Many of the personnel are merely gun-carrying members of the NF who have no training or background. The PSF is ruthless and uses the technique of mass arrests of innocent and guilty alike. The force is equipped with light weapons and mortars. It is mobile and operates an effective radiocommunications net. East Germany provides training and equipment to the PSF, and a number of PSF officers have visited the GDR for training.

2. Revolutionary Security Service

The Revolutionary Security Service (RSS) is responsible for maintaining internal security and for conducting counterespionage activities. The organization, formed shortly after independence, is supervised by the General Investigations department of the Ministry of Interior. Its strength is unknown.

SECRET

The RSS has directed intelligence collection and subversion operations against the Yemen Arab Republic and possibly Oman. Some of the bombings and assassinations in the Y.A.R. may be a result of RSS activities. Domestic operations are focused on the activities of NF dissidents, labor union unrest in Aden, and the activities in the P.D.R.Y. of the NUF, the Adeni dissident organization based in the Y.A.R.

While National Front clandestine operations against the British prior to independence have provided the RSS with a cadre of experienced intelligence personnel, the capability of the RSS in general remains low. Many of the natural ethnic and political assets available in the effort against the British are missing or are also available to opponents of the regime, and many experienced officers have been lost through purges. Since independence, several key members of the RSS have graduated from the East German intelligence school in Berlin.

3. Popular Forces

The Popular Forces (PF) were created in early 1970 as a people's army to fight alongside the regular armed forces to protect the revolution against external and internal enemies. Placed under NF control, the degree and extent of coordination and responsibility government leaders have over its activities is not clear. In the Aden area recruits to the PF have been drawn entirely from members of the National Front, but in up-country areas recruitment has not been limited to Front members. As of January 1971 recruits had started training in the use of light and heavy arms at Al Anad camp under the supervision of two Soviet advisers. Current strength is unknown, but reportedly the eventual aim is to recruit and train 2,000 men. The effectiveness of the PF is not known. Units have fought reasonably well against insurgent forces, and some have been given artillery training by the army. However, a conscription ban was imposed in November 1971 in one part of the country after some of the Popular Forces handed over a battalion's pay to the dissidents.

4. People's Militia

The People's Militia, estimated to be between 5,000 and 10,000 strong, traces its origin to a report written in July 1971 by the P.D.R.Y. Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, Ali Salim al-Bayd, on the "crisis in the political organization" in the Second Governorate. The report concerned difficulties between the governor of that province and the local command of the National Front. According to the report, the prime need was to create a new revolutionary and zealous cadre in the NF political organization. Militia were to be formed and developed from village to center to district to governorate. Training would be the responsibility of the army, which would also set up proper command control for the forces. Financing of the forces would be organized to insure that the main purpose—defense of the revolution—had priority. Recruiting efforts would be concentrated among the poor peasants, who would be given the idea that in fighting for the revolution they would be fighting for their own land. The squad was to be the basic unit, led by an NF leader "full of revolutionary zeal and free of bureaucratic tendencies." Three squads would form a group, three groups would form a patrol, and three patrols would comprise a company. The company would be directed by a military committee of five members, of whom one was to be responsible to a battalion and sit on the District Military Committee. As of November 1972, militia units had been formed in towns and villages and were performing security duty.

The militia apparently is controlled by the National Front. Its exact relationship with the Popular Forces is unclear, and what degree of control the governmental apparatus has over these units is unknown. Militia battalions have conducted joint operations against rebel forces in conjunction with the army, the PSE, and the PF. Training has been received from the army and also apparently from Soviet advisers. As in the case of the Popular Forces, the army has furnished logistical support.