

CHAPTER 12. Phase II:

The Phase of Establishment and Expansion 1969 to 1978

Incorporating Marxism-Leninism into a Tribal Society

In 1969-70, the radical Aden regime appeared as one of the most promising partners for East Germany in the Middle East. The turning point of the “Corrective Move” in June 1969, the launching of the new constitution in late 1970, and the fifth Party Congress in 1972 initiated a phase in South Yemen that built toward the formation of a Soviet-style vanguard party. However, the actual realization was not a guaranteed outcome and thus Soviet and East German engagement first and foremost supported advocates for the Marxist-Leninist cause among the leadership in Aden.

1. INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS: THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD A SOCIALIST STATE

«C’est cette pâte humaine que le gouvernement révolutionnaire est en train de travailler pour construire le socialisme. Un million et demi d’hommes qui tirent leurs revenus de la terre, de la mer... et du désert, et vivent à la limite du dénuement le plus absolu.»¹

1.1 Setting the Stage for a Yemeni Vanguard Party

South Yemenis and international socialists shared their enthusiasm over the intentions of the “revolutionary government” to “develop socialism” out of the “human clay”² of South Yemen. Brehony clearly sympathizes with the positive attitude of those years. He considers the “Glorious Corrective Move” of June 22 1969 the “most decisive event in the early history of independent South Yemen,”

1 | Deffarge and Troeller, 1971, 6.

2 | Translation of “pâte humaine,” in: Deffarge and Troeller, 1971, 6.

as it “marked the emergence of the PRSY as a truly revolutionary state.”³ The new power constellation propelled the implementation of the leftists’ charter of “National Democratic Liberation,” whereas the majority of its provisions was included in the new constitution released on November 30 1970. Henceforth, the People’s Republic of South Yemen was known as the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen.

After South Yemen’s new constitution was launched in 1970, the early decision to expand the British administrative system all over the country served as a solid base of state-building with regard to the consolidation of the PDRY’s state territory.⁴ With regard to the socialist nature of this state- and nation-building policy, the process was intended to be mostly driven by ideological means and justifications:

“The NF leaders turned to the provinces to [...] foster the revolutionary spirit that they thought was essential to get through the period of state-building and the hardships that were necessary.”⁵

The “leaders” of these initial moves were influenced by theoretical anti-colonial writings like the works of Frantz Fanon.⁶ But when it came to the more concrete activity of creating state institutions, the NF relied on strategies used by communist regimes of the Eastern Bloc. Mass organizations were intended to mobilize the “masses” for the cause of the NF and to communicate the party’s policies and ideology to the people. The army was completely restructured based on a “revolutionary concept,” meaning subordinate to the party: The Popular Defence Forces (PDF) were meant to be “a shield in protecting the country *internally* and externally.”⁷ By establishing a socialist economy, the NF regime hoped for a swift transition: From its own condition of “underdevelopment” to a level of welfare similar to the GDR’s. The YSP regime deliberately replaced Fanon’s emancipatory approach of anti-colonialism with Marxist-Leninist ideology. In doing so, the regime not only denied the Yemeni “masses” the ability to emancipate themselves, but ascribed this right and ability to a political vanguard – itself.

The “Corrective Move” had set the political course for the years until the demise of South Yemen and guided the political leadership until the coup of 1986. Salmin had become chairman of the five-member Presidential Council, which also included chief ideologue Ismail and the military man Ali Antar.⁸ The Council

3 | Brehony, 2013, 45.

4 | On the role of administration in the state-building process see: Giddens, 1983.

5 | Brehony, 2013, 59.

6 | Fanon would warn of the difficulties waiting for the newly independent states after “wind of revolution los[t] its velocity,” in: Fanon, 2004, 90.

7 | Naumkin, *Red Wolves of Yemen*, 323; Brehony, 2013, 62.

8 | Brehony, 2013, 45; Lackner, 1985, 64; Burrowes, 2010, 160.

was reduced to three shortly thereafter, and in the following year Ali Nasir forced his way into the council: The three major figures of political life in South Yemen, Salmin, Ismail, and Ali Nasir, had risen to power. The fifth NF Congress followed suit in spring 1972.⁹ Its closing document spelled out the central provisions of the constitution, the commitment to “scientific socialism,” “democratic centralism,” “collective leadership,” and to the “struggle against imperialism, Zionism and reaction.”¹⁰ The NF was renamed National Front Political Organization (NFPO) and a future merger with the Ba’ath and the PDU was in the air. The former General Command was replaced by a Central Committee, the Executive Committee was transformed into a Politburo. The Congress decided to form a secretariat subdivided into bureaus occupied with all relevant areas of internal and external policy. Gradually, the Politburo replaced the Presidential Council as the center of political power in South Yemen. In 1972 the two institutions were comprised of almost the same figureheads.¹¹ Clearly, the redesigning of the NF/NFPO as a Soviet-style vanguard party was under way.

1.2 Internal Frictions: Between “Individual” and “Collective” Leadership

The “Corrective Move” of 1969 had set the agenda for foreign policy as well – toward Moscow and the Eastern Bloc, though the intensity of this relationship hadn’t fully been settled yet. The following eight years were characterized by a political tug-of-war between two factions defined by their ideological orientation and their attitude toward Moscow. Salmin’s faction opted to uphold reservations toward the Eastern Bloc to maintain more maneuvering room on the global scene. Also, Salmin favored his very own interpretation of Maoism. This included a revolutionary approach that was to be initiated at the lowest social level. According to Salmin, leadership was supposed to respond to the action of the masses rather than the other way around. The creation of a vanguard party simply contradicted his political belief in the “autonomy and power of the masses.” Still, it may be doubted that these ideological deliberations were the only reason for him opposing further empowerment of the NF, as this is what the conversion to a vanguard party in fact meant at this point. In practice, Salmin’s style of politics clearly favored him as an individual political leader.

As a consequence, Salmin emerged as the immediate opponent of Moscow-friendly Ismail. Ismail’s main goal was the erection of a “truly” socialist state led by a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. Accordingly, he criticized Salmin on any possible occasion:

9 | Burrowes, 2010, 256.

10 | Articles 1-4 of the new by-laws of the party, in: Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 36.

11 | Salmin, Ismail, Ali Nasir, Ali Saleh Ubad Muqbil (Muqbil), Saleh Musleh, al-Beidh and Muhammad Saleh Muti’a.

“No individual, whatever his qualities of leadership, his genius or feeling for the masses, can ever be a substitute for the collective [...]. Everything done by the individual ends with the individual.”¹²

This quote by Ismail from the late 1970s not only reveals his rejection of Salmin and his style of leadership, but also the reason why Ismail was popular among the younger revolutionaries and intellectuals but less so among the Yemeni population. Ismail's admiration for the Soviet system did not leave room for Salmin's individual charismatic leadership, despite the prominence and popularity of this traditional concept in traditional Yemeni society. However, the concept of “collective leadership” does not necessarily mean a more democratic way ruling. According to Löwenthal, the concept as it was introduced in Moscow after Stalin's reign did not change anything about the distribution of power in the state. Rather, “collective leadership” in the Soviet Union meant the inclusion of advisors in the secretary-general's decision-making process, the “transition from despotic reign of arbitrariness to [...] a relatively enlightened absolutism.”¹³ Ismail, however, had the tendency to take official statements and writings literally and seemed to believe in the concept of “collective leadership” himself.

The internal struggles around Salmin finally erupted in the “June 1978 Crisis.” In September 1977, the NF, rebranded the Unified Political Organization of the National Front (UNFPO) at the Congress of Unification in 1975,¹⁴ finally overruled Salmin's wishes and voted for the creation of a vanguard party in the second half of 1978.¹⁵ Despite the UNFPO's resolution, Salmin openly and aggressively tried to prevent realization of the project. His adversaries rallied behind Ismail and Ali Nasir. Regional politics came into play. Relations between North and South Yemen had been tense throughout the 1970s and fighting had repeatedly occurred on the border. In the middle of promising negotiations between the North Yemeni state and the northern branch of the al-Ahmar tribal confederation, President Ibrahim Muhammad al-Hamdi supposedly was killed on orders from Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi.¹⁶ As a reaction Al-Ghashmi, the new president of the north, was killed by a PDRY emissary, probably on behalf of Salmin.¹⁷ In retrospect, these events of 1977 have to be considered if not the cause then the opportunity for Salmin's downfall. From within the party, Salmin already had been challenged

12 | Embassy of the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Yemen in London. Present and Future, in: Brehony, 2013, 89.

13 | Löwenthal, *Jenseits des Stalinismus*, in: Schmeitzner (Ed.), 2009, 396.

14 | Burrowes, 2010, 256; Lackner, 1985, 70-73.

15 | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des Zentralkomitees der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 140.

16 | Burrowes, 2010, 141 and 154; Burrowes, *Yemen Arab Republic*, in: Chelkowski/Pranger (Ed.), 1988, 236.

17 | Yodfat, 1983, 53.

due to his reluctance toward Moscow: He had refused to support Ethiopia by sending troops in January 1978. At the time, external forces seemed to agree that Salmin was “against the relations with the socialist countries and formed separate [foreign] relations, not through the Foreign Ministry”¹⁸ which produced a popular conspiracy theory circulating until today. According to this interpretation of events, either the extreme left of the NLF¹⁹ or even the Soviet Union in cooperation with East Germany had staged al-Ghashmi’s assassination to get rid of Salmin.²⁰ Regardless of these recriminations, the active engagement of Salmin’s opponents working toward his disempowerment cannot be denied, nor can his death be denied as being convenient for Moscow and East-Berlin. Still, Soviet involvement in the matter remains speculative.

To fulfill Moscow’s wishes, Ismail had ignored Salmin’s decision to refuse South Yemeni participation in Ethiopia and over the next six months he took other steps to weaken Salmin. The Politbüro simply seized the opportunity to force Salmin out of office, officially to prevent an escalation of North-South Yemeni relations. After an attempted coup to save his position, Salmin was arrested and executed.²¹ During Salmin’s “reign” the regime and political system had been consolidated and profound social and economic changes had been introduced. Justifiably, Lackner considers Salmin “the most important figure of the first decade of independence.”²² When Ali Nasir took over Salmin’s post, he got a short but impressive taste of power: The competition and conflict between the veteran leaders that awaited him in retrospect appears predetermined. After an interim presidency of only six months, Ismail, the chief ideologue, succeeded Ali Nasir as president – right on time for the Founding Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party in October of the same year.

18 | Mutia, Muhammad Saleh (member of the NLF’s Politbüro and of the Presidential Council, as well as foreign minister at the time), in: Beirut weekly “al-Houriya,” July 24 1978, in: Ein-Gil, 1981 (2004).

19 | Ein-Gil, 1981 (2004), sine pagina.

20 | Brehony, 2013, 99.

21 | Dresch, 2000, 147.

22 | Lackner, 1985, 78.

2. SOVIET INTERESTS AND FIELDS OF ENGAGEMENT: FROM SUSPICION TO “BEST FRIENDS FOREVER”

“Yemen was of great geostrategic importance for the Soviet Union. Thus, I assume that [the USSR] told our people: Do something there. And that’s how the whole policy in Yemen came about.”²³

After the “Corrective Move” of 1969, Moscow gradually gave up its reservations toward the Aden regime, bilaterally and internationally. In the same year, the Kremlin started its “long-term” involvement and henceforth, bilateral relations continuously intensified. In October 1971, Ali Nasir praised Soviet support and the “firm friendship” of South Yemen with the “socialist camp” as a major factor in South Yemen’s transformation.²⁴ East German ambassador Scharfenberg reports on Ali Nasir’s “almost religious esteem toward the advisors from socialist countries.”²⁵ The decisions of the NF’s Fifth Congress of 1972 led away from marginal extremist currents within the former liberation movement, such as Maoism, that had contradicted Marxist-Leninist ideology. In addition to that, the distance between Aden and Peking seemed to grow and to a certain degree assured Moscow of Aden’s future course.

The restructuring of the NF toward a vanguard party was under way, while East German functionaries served as appreciated and established advisors among the highest ranks of state and administration. In a communiqué from November 1972, the Soviet Union openly sided with the National Front and its “progressive” policies²⁶ and a mere two years later the Kremlin declared “unfailing support” during South Yemen’s transformation process²⁷ – as long as this process evolved along socialist “progressive” lines. But even though the NF regularly exchanged delegations with the CPSU, SED, and other Communist parties of the Eastern Bloc, some of the NF’s policies were considered extremist by both Moscow and East Berlin. Especially with regard to South Yemen’s foreign policy, Soviet and East-German advisors aimed to “generate a more realistic perspective among the leaders of the PRSY.”²⁸

2.1 Engagement in Aden and Soviet Strategy in the Middle East

Internationally, Moscow’s engagement in Aden has to be considered part of the USSR’s wider strategy in the Middle East in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular, combining geostrategic and ideological considerations. The strategy

23 | Interview with Wolfgang Bator on May 27 2011.

24 | Ali Nasser Mohammed, in: Halliday, 1990, 187.

25 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 24.

26 | Halliday, 1990, 187.

27 | Ibid. 188.

28 | Brief Lugenheim an Scharfenberg, April 29 1973, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1555/76, 3.

included ongoing exchange with and support of other potential allies in South Yemen's vicinity to prevent a "strategy of encirclement" by Washington.²⁹ To the Kremlin's displeasure, its strategic allies in the region one by one turned away and were lost to "Moscow's cause". What followed was a phase of Soviet reorientation in the region. It was accompanied by the reopening of the Suez Canal in 1975 and the British withdrawal from the Middle East.³⁰ London's departure left some political space to be filled by external powers. The few years before the increase of U.S. involvement after 1979 were the high times of Soviet influence in the Middle East.

The two cases of "lost Soviet allies" most relevant for Soviet-South Yemeni relations were Egypt and Somalia. Both had required much financial and political maintenance and their loss as a close political partner freed considerable resources for Moscow. Shortly after the Kremlin had given up its military base in Egypt, Chief of the Soviet Navy Admiral Gorshkov paid his first visit to Aden in 1974. He came back only a few years later after Somali leader Muhammad Siad Barré had forced the Soviet naval pullout from Somalia and turned to the United States in 1977.³¹ Obviously, a new safe and reliable Soviet naval base in the region was needed. Intensive engagement by the USSR, GDR, and Cuba in Ethiopia,³² the People's Republic of Congo, Angola, and Mozambique, was now complemented by the establishment of a new foothold at the Bab al-Mandab in Aden. As a consequence, the PDRY became Moscow's major ally at this strategically important position: During the Somali-Ethiopian war, South Yemen served as Moscow's main shipping center for arms, men, and equipment headed for Addis Abeba. Understandably, Somalia "broke up" with the Soviet Union: it declared the termination of their mutual Treaty of Friendship on November 13 1977.³³ Soviet advisors and personnel were expelled and the main Soviet naval base in the region was gone for good. The relocation of the base from Somalia's port of Berbera to Aden coincided with the consolidation of Moscow's position in Ethiopia.³⁴ The Kremlin invested significant sums in Aden's port by expanding the former British facilities.

On May 23 1978, a new agreement on military cooperation between Moscow and Aden was reached and Ali Antar, minister of defense of the PDRY, travelled to East Berlin to meet General Heinz Hoffman and then to Moscow to meet the Soviet

29 | Storckmann, 2012, 309.

30 | Cigar, 1985, 776.

31 | Halliday, 1990, 194.

32 | See Storckmann's detailed account on Soviet engagement and the role of the GDR in Ethiopia and on the Horn of Africa, Storckmann, 2012, 304-312.

33 | Yodfat, 1983, 46.

34 | Treaty of Friendship signed in January 1979, Halliday, 1990, 193 and Chubin, 1980, in: The International Institute for Strategic Studies (Ed.), 303.

Minister of Defense Dmitri Ustinov.³⁵ On August 19, “a unit of Soviet warships [arrived] on an official friendly visit to the port of Aden”³⁶ and three months later “Soviet combat aircraft”³⁷ were positioned on South Yemeni territory. From now on South Yemen served as a training ground for maneuvers, as well as for naval and amphibious landing exercises. There is no evidence that Moscow ever entertained an official military base in South Yemen in the strict sense of a territory granting extra-territorial privileges to the Soviets. However, Moscow had a fully-equipped naval, air, and artillery base at its disposal without the political burden of calling it such.

2.2 Object of Political Speculations and Military Debate: The Island of Socotra

This opens an extremely interesting chapter of Soviet geostrategic engagement in the region: The island of Socotra. The secluded tropical island in the Arabian Sea guards the Gulf of Aden and has long been part of Yemeni territory. International geostrategic interest in the island at the time was high.³⁸ In combination with the natural harbor of Aden, the island is positioned to provide swift naval reaction to any incidents in the region as well as a quick and safe retreat to Aden. Contemporary witnesses like Vladimir Agafinov, a Soviet military interpreter and orientalist, insist that the island of Socotra has never been used as an unofficial naval, air force, or rocket base by the Soviet Union and that Moscow had used it as a major military bluff for Western Secret Services.³⁹ But even though the island had not much to offer in terms of a port or even a moorage, Moscow indeed had started to use the waters around Socotra to anchor its ships around 1970, if not earlier.⁴⁰ Hence, the transfer of the Soviet moorage from Berbera, Somalia to the port of Aden in 1977 seems an elusive move. With the moorage came a tracker station, a tactical missile warehouse, a big fuel storage and accommodation facilities for about one thousand people. Thus, it is more than likely that the late 1970s indeed witnessed the installation of “mooring buoys off the island of Socotra”⁴¹ that would counter Agafinov’s statements.

2.3 Moscow Commits: Domestic Politics and New Party Ties

Regardless of the extent of military facilities on Socotra, a stable and loyal South Yemen was of highest priority for Soviet strategy in the Horn of Africa after 1977. The

35 | ADN, June 2 1978, in: Yodfat, 1983.

36 | FBIS, USSR, July 11 1978, F3 and San Diego Union, December 1 1978, both quoted in: Yodfat, 1983, 55.

37 | Ibid., in: Yodfat, 1983, 55; Cigar, 1985, 781.

38 | On the strategic relevance of Socotra at the time see: Elie, 2006, 151ff.

39 | Agafinov visited Socotra several times (1976 –1980), Agafinov, 2008; Elie, 2006, 152.

40 | Yodfat, 1983, 6; 110; Agafinov, 2008.

41 | Halliday, 1990, 203.

increased Soviet presence had a significant impact on the internal developments that mostly served Ismail and his faction,⁴² and thus the NF's emergence as a communist vanguard party in 1978. In this regard, the change of leadership from Salmin to Ali Nasser and Ismail was not to the disadvantage of Moscow and East Berlin. Moscow denied any "Arab and Western media reports of Soviet, Cuban, and East German involvement."⁴³ Nonetheless, Halliday hints at a certain Soviet involvement during the internal crisis of June 1978.⁴⁴ This not only appears possible but also highly plausible with regard to Moscow's previous naval activities in the area. Furthermore, Scharfenberg reports of a meeting with the secretary-general of the Communist Party of Lebanon, Nicolas Chaoui, in June 1977, who shared Ismail's position on the matter of the formation of a vanguard with Scharfenberg:

"The socialist states had to acknowledge [the fact that any Western support for the PDRY would be terminated as soon as the UNFPO was reformed as a vanguard party]. Ismail explained to [Chaoui] that the formation of a vanguard party depended on the Soviet Union."⁴⁵

However, the Soviet Union clearly had no interest in an escalation of violence within or outside its new Socialist model state, such as between the two Yemens, as this most certainly would have led to further involvement of other powers in the region where Moscow preferred to be left alone. Without doubt, both new presidents, Ali Nasir and Ismail, were more convenient allies for the Kremlin than Salmin had ever been and Soviet-South Yemeni relations intensified accordingly: Shortly before the NF completed its metamorphosis into a Soviet-type vanguard party in 1978, official party ties were established between the CPSU and the future YSP.⁴⁶

As a consequence of the PDRY's engagement in Ethiopia, Aden was finally granted a dear wish that its leadership had expressed in 1973:⁴⁷ The PDRY was invited as an observer to the Comecon annual meeting in Moscow in June 1979.⁴⁸ In that year, the Soviet-Yemeni relations clearly reached a new level: Only three months after the meeting, Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin visited Aden, and in October Ismail once more met Brezhnev in Moscow. Apart from a renewal of economic and technical assistance and an agreement on future collaboration on the party level between the YSP and the CPSU, Moscow and Aden signed the

42 | Yodfat, 1983, 51 and 52.

43 | *Ibid.*, 53.

44 | Halliday, 1990, 191.

45 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 50.

46 | Yodfat, 2011 (1983), 56.

47 | Brief Scharfenberg an Willerding, July 25 1973, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1555/76, 52.

48 | At this point, Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam already were full members of the Comecon, while the PDRY shared an observer status with Angola, Afghanistan, Laos, Mozambique, and Ethiopia, in: Halliday, 1990, 192.

first “Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.”⁴⁹ The treaty was followed by similar agreements with the GDR and ČSSR in November. Yodfat, one of the few academic commentators on the treaty, hints at the possible similarity of the treaty’s Article 2 with what became known as the “Brezhnev Doctrine”: The signatories agreed that they would aim “for the safeguarding and further development of the socio-economic gains of their peoples.”⁵⁰ Yodfat’s comment however, appears exaggerated and manipulated by the atmosphere of the Cold War. Though comparable to the bilateral agreements forming the Warsaw Pact, all Soviet treaties with states from the “Global South” excluded any guarantees of mutual assistance in case of attack.

Nonetheless, the Treaties of Friendship outside the Comecon had a significant symbolic political meaning. The signatory states declared their close relationship with the Eastern Bloc and committed themselves to a common foreign policy position. Furthermore, Halliday notes several characteristics of this specific Treaty that, according to him, were “noticeable.”⁵¹ While Article 1 of the treaty assured Aden of the “*unbreakable* friendship of the two countries,” Article 5 emphasized that military cooperation would continue to strengthen Aden’s defense capacity – to secure Moscow’s new naval “base” in the region. In addition to that, the treaty raised rumors about “secret clauses”. Again, these may be speculations. But at the time, these theoretical considerations created suspicion among other regional actors and the USSR’s adversaries, which in turn could have led to very concrete and real political consequences. On top of that, Moscow did not do much to deny the rumors: By October 1979, when about two brigades of Soviet troops were airlifted from southern Russia to the PDRY and Ethiopia,⁵² the Kremlin’s claim to its new strategic base was more or less common knowledge.

All in all, the “Treaties of Friendship” were part of the wider framework of Moscow’s new policy of commitment that included noticeable endeavors of its closest allies. For instance, official relations between the East German and South Yemeni army were established as complementary support for the intensive Soviet and Cuban engagement in the military.⁵³ Secondly, the “Treaties” were the preliminary stage

49 | Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam enjoyed treaties including mutual assistance. Treaties comparable to the South Yemen Treaty of Friendship had been signed with Egypt and India in 1971, followed by Treaties with Iraq, Somalia, Angola, Mozambique, and Afghanistan. Earlier in 1979, Moscow had signed a similar Treaty in Ethiopia and in the following year with Syria. See: Halliday, 1990, 193. On the Soviet bilateral Treaties of Friendship also see Chapter 4. Squeezed between Bonn and Moscow: The GDR’s Foreign Policy – An Overview.

50 | Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen, October 25 1979, in: Pravda, September 26 1979; Also see: Yodfat, 1983, 109.

51 | Halliday, 1990, 194.

52 | Ibid. 195.

53 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 86.

for possible further integration into the Soviet sphere of influence. Lastly, the “Treaties” were of high symbolic value for the PDRY, which had further isolated itself in the region. After the establishment of a Soviet-style vanguard party, they were a keystone of South Yemen’s long-term alignment with the Eastern Bloc.

3. THE PHASE OF EXPANSION: THE GDR AS THE DIRECTOR OF “CIVILIAN MATTERS” OF SOCIALIST NATION- AND STATE-BUILDING IN SOUTH ARABIA

“It was assumed that after [...] independence the PRSY would mostly need political-ideological help and advice on fundamental questions about the economy and the state apparatus.”⁵⁴

(Embassy of the GDR in Aden on the activities of East German advisors, 1972)

After the hesitant attitude of the 1960s, Moscow began to explicitly back East Germany’s interest and engagement in South Yemen and finally even directed East Berlin with regard to the extent of the SED’s duties in the PDRY. For Ethiopia, Dagne mentions the division of labor between Moscow and East Berlin with regard to the security apparatus.⁵⁵ According to him, the USSR focused on military support in Ethiopia, while the GDR was occupied with the field of internal security.

For the PDRY, this concept was also applied, and even expanded: While Heinz-Dieter Winter considers a “division of labor” between the civil and the military sphere in South Yemen at least a possibility, Fritz Balke emphasizes the exclusive Soviet engagement in the field of the military. Hans Bauer’s interpretation of East German presence even relies on the fact that an agreement between Moscow and East Berlin on a “division of labor” had existed. According to him, the GDR was responsible for the “inner stability” of the country,⁵⁶ while the Soviet Union, alongside with Cuba, contributed the “military” part.⁵⁷ When Moscow opted for Aden as its new unofficial base in the region, East Germany was then included in

54 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberatertätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 33.

55 | Dagne, 2006, 35.

56 | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011; Interview with Hans Bauer on June 20 2011; Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter July 3 2013; “With regard to the military, the PDRY for the biggest part was supported by the Soviet Union.” in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 86.

57 | “In [South] Yemen, with the assistance of a small number of specialists, we helped to organize the militia”. Rodriguez, Carlos Rafael, Conference of Deputy Chairman of the State Council of Cuba, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez with U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig, in Mexico, 23 November 1981, “Year of the 20th Anniversary of Victory at Playa Giron,” in: Russian & East German Documents on the Horn of Africa, 1977-78, Cold War

the military sphere,⁵⁸ probably due to East Berlin's good standing among the Yemeni leadership and the mounting material demands of the regime. As a consequence, East Berlin emerged as the *director of "civilian" matters of state-building*, which was inseparably mixed with matters of ideology and the integration of society when applying the concept of socialist state- and nation-building.

3.1 Bilateral Rapprochement and the Major Tool of East Germany's State-Building Policy: The GDR's Policy of Consultancy

"The GDR supported [South Yemen] in various central fields, mostly by sharing its experiences during the period of the establishment of an anti-fascist-democratic order."⁵⁹

(Results of the GDR's governmental advisor groups in South Yemen, 1972)

Actors from all three spheres of East German foreign policy making shared with each other their experiences during the decisive years of South Yemeni state- and nation-building. Apart from security issues, the whole process was mostly coordinated by the embassy, from 1972 to 1978 under its ambassador, Günther Scharfenberg. However, bilateral rapprochement following the establishment of diplomatic relations was mostly driven by the SED party and its organs.⁶⁰ Exchange of delegations on all levels became a major tool in East Berlin's policy, whereas each high-ranking delegation was accompanied by at least one party official. The first visit at the party level was even performed before the new constitution was launched, in early November 1970 under Ismail's leadership. Ismail returned to East Berlin one and a half years later, and the Yemenis received the East German party delegation in February 1974. On the East German side all three meetings were coordinated by Gerhard Grünberg.⁶¹ Shortly thereafter, delegation visits attained a new level of importance. In September 1976, Willi Stoph visited Aden

International History Project Bulletin Issues 9-10, 210; Also see: Cuba, in: Burrowes, 2010, 83; Scharfenberg, 2012, 65.

58 | A protocol for the support of the PDRY's military by the GDR was signed in June 1978, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 86.

59 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberatertätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 39.

60 | Stenografische Niederschrift der Beratung mit der Delegation der NLF Südjemen am 2.11.1970 im Hause des ZKs, in: BArch SAPMO/DY 30/11407, 5-71. Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 167.

61 | Grünberg, member of the Politbüro since 1966 and mostly occupied with question of agriculture, was assigned to entertain relations with the PDRY at the highest Party level. Scharfenberg, 2012, 52.

as a high-ranking representative.⁶² In June 1977, a “Party and governmental delegation” under Werner Lamberz renewed the party agreement between the UNFPO and the SED until 1979.⁶³

In the heyday, there were more than 2,000 East German experts delegated to the PDRY.⁶⁴ By that time, East Germany appears to have had a full-fledged state-building policy in mind. By sending the constitutional advisory group, the GDR had signaled its full support for the establishment of a functional socialist state apparatus. Apart from juridical advice, the economy was at the forefront of GDR consultancy. While the advisory group may be considered the first foreign policy tool used in East Germany’s support of socialist state- and nation-building, the first agreement represents its immediate follow-up: The Agreement of Scientific-Technical Cooperation⁶⁵ (WTZ). The WTZ Agreement sent some thirty advisors to Aden. The majority of these delegates were assigned as governmental advisors in all fields relevant for state-building, while another five other advisors were sent under the Kulturarbeitsplan, the “Cultural Working Plan” of 1970-71.⁶⁶ These five were supported by 20 more experts, among them three teachers. The GDR’s engagement under the provisions of the “Working Plan” was initiated in October 1969 and was transformed into a long-term mission in 1971.⁶⁷ Active involvement during those early years was demonstrated in the fields of economy and finance, agriculture, youth, education, communication, and the media: In 1972, East German advisors introduced the basic principles of planning and socialist economy, directing the first steps toward agrarian reform and socialization, including the formation of agrarian collectives and agricultural mass organization.⁶⁸ This

62 | Stoph visited Aden just one month before Honecker took over his post as Staatsratsvorsitzender and thus international representative of the GDR. Scharfenberg, 2012, 56.

63 | Communiqué on the occasion of a visit by an NFPO delegation in East-Berlin in February 1974, Agreement on the cooperation between the SED and the UNFPO, June 13 1977, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR; 1987, 140; 140-1; Scharfenberg, 2012, 59.

64 | Panecke, Volker, Vorwort, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 7.

65 | German: Wissenschaftlich-technische Zusammenarbeit (WTZ). Wissenschaftlich-technische Zusammenarbeit zwischen der DDR und der VDRJ und wissenschaftlich-technische Hilfeleistung der DDR gegenüber der VDRJ in Form des Einsatzes von DDR-Beratern in zentralen Staatsorganen und im Bereich der Wirtschaft der VDRJ 1971-1974 [Abschlussbericht], in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 1-32.

66 | The Kulturarbeitsplan for a period of one to two years was renewed regularly. The next followed in February 1973, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 47.

67 | Ibid., 33.

68 | Ibid., 38-41.

“Policy of Consultancy” was translated into the first economic five-year plan in South Yemen in April 1974.⁶⁹

Another important area of consultation was the field of foreign policy. According to Scharfenberg, Aden itself had requested support, and in September 1974, a joint delegation of the CC International Relations Section and the MfAA visited the PDRY.⁷⁰ The topics discussed reveal the potential explosiveness of this advisory mission: The possible establishment of relations between the PDRY, the USA, and the FRG were to be reconsidered. These consultations have to be considered one of the few occasions when East Germany was able to distinguish itself as a proactive actor in international relations: East Berlin claimed agency for a matter concerned with the “other Germany” in the West. The consultations resulted in the reestablishment of relations between Aden and Bonn on September 16 1974. The FRG’s representative, Alexander Mühlen, arrived soon thereafter.⁷¹ In May 1976, East German foreign policy consultancy was institutionalized by Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Klaus Willerding.⁷²

The MR Groups: An Open Secret of Stasi Presence in Aden

Bauer concedes: “For sure it was no secret that any advisory mission [abroad] was a political mission.”⁷³ The most notorious advisory groups in this respect were and are the so-called “MR Groups.”⁷⁴ Not without reason, Scharfenberg considers these groups “the most important pillar of political consultancy,”⁷⁵ as they were delegated by the GDR’s Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of State Security. Most of them were sent to Aden to support the state-building process in the PDRY. The members of these groups who could rely on expertise in their assigned field were either sent directly by the MfS, or joined the ranks of the Secret Service right before their mission abroad. Comprised of several experts and an executive of the group, the MR Groups officially were placed as advisors at the highest governmental levels and regularly consulted with several of the PDRY’s ministers.⁷⁶ Thus, only the most loyal cadres were selected to serve as these kind of consultants, as they advised Yemeni personnel up to the rank of the PDRY’s government and thus party officials. According to Hans Bauer, the former GDR resident in Aden, the

69 | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des Zentralkomitees der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 140.

70 | Among the delegation was Peter Rabenhorst, at the time member of the ZK International Relations Section. Scharfenberg, 2012, 48.

71 | Botschafter Held, Sanaa, an das Auswärtige Amt, June 3 1976, in: AzAP der BRD, 1976, Vol.1, 1. Januar bis 30. Juni, FN 1 and 2, 807; Scharfenberg, 2012, 69.

72 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 49.

73 | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

74 | Abbreviation for German Ministerratgruppe. English: Groups of the Council of Ministers.

75 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 34.

76 | Ibid., 38.

MR Groups worked closely with both the “partner country” and the “embassy” on the ground, though contemporary witnesses report of regular conflicts over responsibilities between the ambassador and MfS delegates. Scharfenberg, for example, remembers the independent *modus operandi* of the MR Group at his arrival in 1972 and how he tried to clarify questions of responsibilities in Aden.⁷⁷ According to him, the head of the MR Group in Aden consulted with him on a weekly basis, and with the heads of the other advisory groups on a monthly basis or according to need.

The conflict of jurisdiction between the embassy and consultants is a telling example for the conflicts inherent in the GDR’s political system, especially the competition between party and state institutions. While there usually was not much room for discussion for the state institutions within the borders of the GDR, this was a very different matter abroad. Even though the MfS was “sword and shield of the Party,” and, according to the principle of “democratic centralism,” ranked above state institutions in the hierarchy, it was the East German embassies that entertained personal contacts and were able to accumulate insider knowledge about the country. This was even more the case in a remote state like South Yemen, where only few political actors spoke anything but Arabic.

3.2 Integration of Society: Training, (Re-)Education and the Formation of a New Public

As part of its “low-profile” strategy, East Germany had sought contacts below the governmental level among the “mass organizations” early on, mostly to promote the establishment of diplomatic relations. After relations between the GDR and South Yemen were established, the major goal was to direct the process of “the integration of society” of socialist state-building, that is, the homogenization and centralization of mass organizations.⁷⁸ Lenin had described “integration of society” through political and social mass organizations, including the media. According to him, they were to serve as a “Transmissionsriemen,” a transmission belt, translating Marxist-Leninist ideology and party policies to society.

Apart from the first treaties initiated by the party at the state level, a significant number of other actors became active in South Yemen. Especially at the level of foreign policy making, all actors outside the state and Party apparatus had been highly active in the PDRY in the early years of East German-South Yemeni relations. The central concept for the establishment of relations between mass organizations was the concept of “solidarity.”

⁷⁷ | Ibid., 2012, 36.

⁷⁸ | Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 56.

“Realizing the National-Democratic Development”:⁷⁹ Integration of the Media

The two major fields of East German economic engagement in the Third World had been the infrastructure of telecommunications and print industry⁸⁰ – and not without reason. Similar to the centralized direction and control of East German media, South Yemeni media was embedded in the PDRY’s political system. East German media actors had become active early on to support the GDR’s state- and nation-building assistance, foremost for the “integration of society.” In the late 1960s the SED’s international media service ADN⁸¹ had relied on a local journalist, but finally established its office in Aden under leadership of Deba Wienand. This was based on a cooperation agreement between the ADN and the Aden News Agency (ANA) which included free exchange of content as well as six free college placements in Berlin and Prague.⁸² Also, ANA received a loaned radio unit under the obligation to broadcast the Arab programs of the ADN. Without doubt, the GDR aimed to have Yemeni media in its grip.

On July 28 1971, a governmental agreement on postal and communication services was signed.⁸³ Only a few months later, Scharfenberg reports on a meeting of the NF’s Politbüro, CC, and the media on the “intensification of the political-ideological impact of mass media.”⁸⁴ This confirms the official report on the work of East German governmental advisors in 1972: “Advisors [on communication focused on] the efficient realization of the national-democratic development through mass media.”⁸⁵ Shortly thereafter a commission on ideology at the CC was founded with its main function being “the enforcement and coordination of ideological work in the country [...] while especially focusing on mass media.”⁸⁶ The political process of media integration was sealed by an agreement on

79 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberaterstätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 43.

80 | A printing house from Leipzig was active in Aden, in: Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

81 | Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst; English: General German News Service.

82 | Vertrag zwischen dem Allg. Deutschen Nachrichtendienst, der Nachrichtenagentur der DDR, und der Aden News Agency, der Nachrichtenagentur der Volksrepublik Südjemen, über Zusammenarbeit auf dem Gebiet des Nachrichtenwesens, in: BArch DC 900/920.

83 | Regierungsabkommen über Post- und Fernmeldewesen, July 28 1971, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 139.

84 | Informationen zu einigen inneren und äußeren Problemen der VDRJ, Aden, February 6 1973, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1555/76, 100.

85 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberaterstätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 43.

86 | Gambke et al., 1974, 106.

cooperation between a newly created television committee in South Yemen with its East German counterpart in June 1972.⁸⁷

Another important reason for the GDR's interest in South Yemen's media was its intention to control the image of East Germany abroad. During Honecker's official visit to South Yemen in 1979, GDR media was instructed by the Agitation Section to provide South Yemeni media with features about the GDR and publications written and designed for the region.⁸⁸ East German journalists and advisors in the field remained active in South Yemen throughout the GDR's existence, while their role as the "Transmissionsriemen" of Marxist-Leninist ideology and East German interests toward the South Yemeni people never changed. All of the media actors had to abide by "party and state discipline"⁸⁹ – just like any other East German actor abroad.

Organizing the Masses: Unifying and Controlling Workers, Women, and Youth

Cooperation with mass organizations was performed quite extensively, whereas the GDR got quickly involved with the workers union, women's union, and the youth organization. The General Union of Yemeni Women, for example, had been founded in February 1968 and in 1971 the society's leader, Aida Yafa'i, visited the GDR.⁹⁰ Relations between the workers and trade unions and the FDGB had been established as early as 1961. Immediately following independence, the self-directed ATUC was replaced by the General Union of Workers, which was modelled on socialist mass organizations. Relations between the FDGB and this new centralized federation were made official in 1969.⁹¹ While the Yemeni trade unions once had been one of the major revolutionary driving forces, the organizations had lost their influence and credibility during the revolutionary fighting while the NLF actively homogenized what was left of the trade unions: "The Soviet and East German advisors [...] did everything to eradicate [the trade unions'] independence and to create an organization supportive of the regime

87 | Vereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem Staatlichen Komitee für Fernsehen beim Ministerrat der DDR und dem Fernsehen der VDRJ, June 2 1972, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140.

88 | Vorschläge für auslandsinformatrische Maßnahmen anlässlich des Besuchs einer hochrangigen Delegation der DDR im Sozialistischen Äthiopien und in der VDRJ vom 11. Oktober 1979 der Abteilung Auslandsinformation, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 4959, 1-6.

89 | Report on a journalist's dismissal after the events of the "1986 crisis" in Aden. Stellungnahme zum politischen Fehlverhalten des Genossen [geschwärzt], March 17 1986, Verband der Journalisten der DDR, in: BStU MfS HA XX Nr.13169, 179f.

90 | Dahlgren, 1998; Halliday, 1974, 241; Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 59f; Scheider, 1989, 263.

91 | Aktenvermerk über eine Gespräch mit Herrn Alaini, Vertreter der Aden-TUC im Allarabischen Gewerkschaftsbund (ICATU) am 4.Dezember 1961 in den Räumen des Büros des Bevollmächtigten der DDR in der VAR, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1224/71, 145-147; Gambke et al., 1974, 111; Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 57f.

according to the real-socialist model.”⁹² In May 1971, and following East German advice,⁹³ the independent leadership of the trade unions was terminated by force, and in early 1972 an Institute for Trade Union Studies led by Soviet and East German lecturers was established.

But workers and women were only of secondary interest for the GDR, as the former represented merely a marginal part of the population and the latter remained politically insignificant.⁹⁴ To change South Yemen’s society in the long run, it was the youth who had to be converted to Marxist-Leninist ideology and the directed toward a socialist political system.

“In many ways, Asheed is the most important mass organization in the PDRY. Part of the reason for this is purely demographic: approximately one-quarter of South Yemen’s young population are between the ages of 16 and 28. [...] Above and beyond this, however, the YSP has found the youth of the country most open to ideas of social reform and change.”⁹⁵

From the first days of diplomatic relations until the end of the GDR, the East German youth organization FDJ⁹⁶ was actively involved in South Yemen,⁹⁷ first and foremost with a brigade of about 25 delegates “training young Yemeni cadres in technical vocations”⁹⁸ in the present-day governorate of Abyan. The first agreements between the FDJ and Asheed were signed in November 1971 in East Berlin⁹⁹ and cooperation was expanded significantly over the following years. Further activities of the group were coordinated by a member of the Stasi-based MR Group, Manfred Weigandt. Weigandt was assigned to be the advisor for state media, but was also closely involved in the preparation of the Xth World Festival of

92 | Scheider, 1989, 262.

93 | Unger, DDR-Erfahrungen gefragt, in: Horizont 23/71, 1971, 28-29.

94 | Dahlgren, 1998.

95 | Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 59.

96 | FDJ – Freie Deutsche Jugend; English: Free German Youth.

97 | The “FDJ Friendship Brigades” were organized by the “Solidary Committee,” and thus any aid provided by the FDJ was also part of so-called “solidarity spending”. in: Howell, 1994, 313.

98 | See: Zusammenarbeit mit Jugend- und Studentenorganisationen in der VDRJ 1969-1990, in: BArch DY 24/22196, 21884, 22197, 21886, and 22198; Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 176; Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011; Scharfenberg, 2012, 44.

99 | See: Vereinbarungen und Kommuniqués zur Zusammenarbeit des Zentralrates der FDJ mit den Zentralkomitees von Jugendorganisationen der VDR Jemen, in: BArch SAPMO/DY 24/21884 Vol.2; Interview with Faruq Mustafa, member of the CC of the Democratic Youth Organization of Yemen, in: Neues Deutschland, November 30 1972.

Youth and Students.¹⁰⁰ In January 1973, the PDRY established a National Festival Committee (NFC) to prepare for the World Festival. The GDR's "Red Woodstock"¹⁰¹ still has to be considered part of East Berlin's long-term "policy of recognition" and the event clearly followed the "strategy of the honest broker" toward the Global South, as the Festival's slogan indicates: The GDR was to incorporate "anti-imperialist solidarity, peace, and friendship."¹⁰² The supposedly "better Germany" propagated a relationship with the Global South based on "equality."¹⁰³

East Berlin clearly hoped to direct as much of the process as possible: "Comments by the GDR embassy toward the Festival Committee were in principle included in [the preparatory] plans."¹⁰⁴ Among the activities during the preparation were joint events of the South Yemeni Youth and the Soviet and East German embassies. Most importantly, the Committee induced the founding of the NF youth group in this context in February 1973,¹⁰⁵ the Yemeni Union of Democratic Youth (YUDY). The YUDY established relations with the FDJ right away and also organized itself among the South Yemeni students in the GDR. Particularly with the Yemeni youth, the YSP and SED appeared to have cooperated successfully: In the early 1980s, contemporaries considered YUDY the "best organized, most dynamic and progressive mass organization in the PDRY [...], being recognized in the party constitution as the YSP's main reserve and assistant."¹⁰⁶ In conclusion, despite the considerable impact of trade unions, it was the youth, and relations between the youth organizations in particular, that opened the door for East German engagement.

(Re-)Educating South Yemeni Society

Apart from mass organizations, the major avenue for GDR engagement to further the "integration of society" in the socialist sense was the field of education. In March 1976, a delegation of the Academy of Pedagogy of the GDR travelled to Aden¹⁰⁷ and a protocol on scientific-technical cooperation was signed in September 1976. This was followed by an agreement on the mutual recognition of academic degrees and transcripts in April 1979, paving the way for the intensification of

100 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 39.

101 | Comp. Blog – The GDR Objectified. The Red Woodstock: 10th World festival of Youth and Students East Berlin, no author.

102 | VDRJ, zur Entwicklung des Landes, 1973, in: BStU MfS Allg. S. Nr.332/73, 16.

103 | Howell, 1994, 306.

104 | Volksdemokratische Republik Jemen, zur Entwicklung des Landes, 1973, in: BStU MfS Allg. S. Nr.332/73, 12.

105 | Informationen zu einigen inneren und äußeren Problemen der VDRJ, Aden, February 6 1973, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1555/76, 101.

106 | Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 59.

107 | Grünberg, 2012, 52.

future exchange.¹⁰⁸ To be able to influence education in the new state, however, a different strategy was needed.

For the SED leadership, “integration of society” meant the “homogenization of society” and they thus aimed at applying strategies in South Yemen similar to those used in the GDR. Schools, technical training centers, and even Aden University, which had opened in 1975, were designed as centers of ideological multiplication and propaganda. The East German “collective” of authors who wrote a highly ideological state publication on South Yemen summarizes the GDR’s role in this process and emphasizes the importance of the “measures to ideologically stabilize”¹⁰⁹ the central party in Aden. Also, they minutely describe all the steps taken by East Germany to support this process, most prominently the establishment of a College of Political Sciences in Aden in 1971.¹¹⁰ Teachers of Marxism-Leninism and scientific socialism were delegated by the “CPSU, the SED and other Communist parties”¹¹¹ to teach about their vision for South Yemen.

The ideological education at the College of Aden was complemented by programs abroad. In December 1973, the NF itself had asked for the extension of the “program of NF-leading functionaries in the GDR which was readily granted.”¹¹² In 1971, the South Yemeni minister of economy and industry¹¹³ himself trained there and later on aimed for the inclusion of economics and finances in the program. Furthermore, a high number of other high-ranking South Yemeni party functionaries were educated in Moscow and East Berlin, while vacation packages were granted regularly to the most important cadres and their families.¹¹⁴ The GDR clearly presented itself as the “shop window of socialism,”¹¹⁵ selling their concept of socialist state- and nation-building to the South Yemenis.

However, neither cadre training “on the job” nor at the party school can be considered the central focus of East German engagement in the field: “Youth education is

108 | Abkommen über die gegenseitige Anerkennung von akademischen Graden und Zeugnissen der Bildung, April 18 1979, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-1.

109 | Gambke et al., 1974, 104.

110 | German: Hochschule für politische Wissenschaften.

111 | Gambke et al., 1974, 105; 112. The first lecturer groups consisted of three instructors on ideology and two translators, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 41.

112 | Scharfenberg himself openly advocated for it. Brief Scharfenberg an Rost, December 20 1973, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1555/76, 116f.

113 | No transliteration given: Abd Al-Azziz Abd al-Walli (al-Walli).

114 | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011.

115 | German: Schaufenster des Sozialismus. For the Soviet union East Germany served as their “shop window of Socialism” toward the West, in: Wentker, 2007, 6.

political education”¹¹⁶ was the slogan for East German engagement in this policy field. In the GDR, youth had always played a highly political role for the “planned development of socialism” to ensure the next generation’s ideological loyalty and engagement. This goal was pursued by “educating the socialist personality.”¹¹⁷ The creation of the “new human” regularly was considered the most effective during childhood and adolescence. By organizing courses for South Yemeni teachers, the teaching philosophy was transferred to the PDRY, while the “Soviet experiences” served as the East German and thus South Yemeni role model.¹¹⁸

The GDR’s multifaceted strategy to transfer the East German educational approach to South Yemen unfolded continuously over the 1970s. Not only did it aim at determining the pedagogical approach and ideological basis for schooling, pre-schooling, and vocational training of youth, but also at directing the concrete implementation of the new system by educating disseminators and teachers in South Yemen and socialist countries by creating teaching materials and supervising the process. The placement of two advisors to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Sports and Youth was greeted enthusiastically in the GDR’s evaluation report from 1972.¹¹⁹ According to this report, the East German advisor had significantly influenced the new law on education and contributed to all central documents on education, including the curricula for all schools and the creation of a separate ministry unit occupied with political-ideological strategies in education.¹²⁰ Throughout the 1970s, East German lecturers and instructors taught the fundamental principles of the GDR school system under labels like: “Principles of socialist School [education] policy in the GDR,” “Selected Problems of the Development of Marxist-Leninist Pedagogy,” and “Theory and Praxis of Collective Education in the GDR.”¹²¹ These presentations and workshops

116 | Direktive für die Reise einer Delegation des Ministeriums für Volksbildung in VDR Jemen [March 1 to April 24 1977], in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 49-51.

117 | Segert/Zierke, in: Judt (ed.), 1998, 177.

118 | Direktive für die Reise einer Delegation des Ministeriums für Volksbildung in VDR Jemen [March 1 to April 24 1977], in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 49-51.

119 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberaterstätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 43.

120 | These early advisors had been assigned under the Kulturarbeitsplan 1970-71, which was regularly renewed, in: Brief Bollmann (Botschaft Aden) an Sittig, October 31 1971, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 141. Also see: Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberaterstätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 43.

121 | Anlage: Themen der Vorträge von Prof. Dr. Wilms und Teilnehmerkreis, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 40-42.

were designed for to be replicated in South Yemeni education.¹²² In 1975, the First Pedagogic Congress of the PDRY had decided on the establishment of eight-grade comprehensive schools following the GDR model. East German curricula were introduced¹²³ and in 1977 the last cohort sixth graders from the former English school system was to be examined.

Until then no standardized procedure of teacher training had existed in South Yemen. As such, “a high number of qualification courses [for multipliers] was the solution at the time.”¹²⁴ New books and materials for the new system were to be formulated by the recently founded Pedagogic Center supported by East German, Soviet, and UNESCO experts.¹²⁵ But teacher training first of all meant ideological training. After several visits by Marxist-Leninist lecturers, a permanent lecturer was delegated in 1977 to educate multipliers of the Ministry of Education.¹²⁶ He was supported by at least two more GDR experts on education in late 1978.¹²⁷ Finally, East Germany’s engagement in the field of education was complemented by the establishment of a permanent German lectorate in Aden in 1978.¹²⁸ Instructions from December 1978 continued the line of action of the years prior: The delegation was supposed to “impart the GDR’s experiences on political-ideological education in science classes” and to explain “what knowledge, perceptions, abilities, and convictions their students are supposed to acquire in biology, chemistry in physics.”¹²⁹

A report on the work of the GDR’s experts in 1978 highlights the actual level of intensity of East German engagement in the education sector by formulating concrete objectives for the following years: Gathering information on the training of teachers at all levels, identifying possible obstacles for the PDRY Ministry of

122 | Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 60-74.

123 | Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 60; Karuse, 2009, 206.

124 | Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 61.

125 | All East German educational advisors worked closely with Soviet advisors in the late 1970s, in: Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 65; Also see: Delegational visit by Vice-President of the GDR’s Academy of Pedagogic Sciences Günter Wilms in Macrh 1976, in: Scharfenberg, 2012, 52; Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 60.

126 | Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 87.

127 | Brief Bollmann an Sittig, December 4 1978, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 143.

128 | Protokoll über die Einrichtung eines Deutschlektorats in Aden, April 1978, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-1.

129 | Brief Bollmann an Sittig, December 4 1978, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 143.

Education to the implementation of the eight-grade comprehensive school, and “orientation toward fields of the GDR system of education where concrete help and support can be offered as a communication of experiences.”¹³⁰ East German efforts in the schooling system were complemented by the work of an East German advisor who accompanied the establishment of a kindergarten system in the early 1980s.¹³¹

The high priority of education in East Germany’s policy of socialist state- and nation-building for example is expressed by a visit paid in 1982 by Margot Honecker, the minister of education and wife of the secretary-general.¹³² Meanwhile, the PDRY minister of education, Hassan al-Salami (al-Salami),¹³³ at the time was pursuing his East German doctorate in education as a distance learner.¹³⁴ Two years after Margot Honecker’s trip to Aden, al-Salami travelled to Berlin for a return visit and attended the GDR’s 35th Anniversary. His personal friendship with the Honecker couple¹³⁵ turned out to be a decisive factor for the evolution of the character of East German-Yemeni relations.

3.3 The Backbone of Socialist State-Building: The Internal and External Security Apparatus¹³⁶

“It was extremely difficult [...] to build up a security apparatus in South Yemen. Our decision was guided by the world strategic position of Aden. And very different from the majority of the countries of the Near East, [in Aden] we were welcomed with open arms.”¹³⁷

(Markus Wolf, Head of the HV A of the MfS)

130 | Vorgaben für die Berichterstattung zum Studien- bzw. Schuljahresabschluß [sic!] 1977/78 der Kader des Ministeriums für Volksbildung der DDR in der VDR Jemen (Anlage), 1978, sine diem, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874.

131 | Brief Bollmann der HA IV Abt.II and Kopp, October 17 1977, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 94; October 14th, daily South Yemeni newspaper, June 4 1982.

132 | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des Zentralkomitees der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 170.

133 | Arabic: Ḥassan Al-Salāmī.

134 | Bericht über eine Dienstreise in die VDRJ vom 22.3. bis 3.4.1977 by Scheidig, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 1874, 72.

135 | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011.

136 | For an introduction to archival material on military and MfS’ activities in South Yemen see: Ch 2. On Archival Research, Technicalities, and the State of Research, 1. State of Research: The Selection of Secondary Sources for an Interdisciplinary Undertaking.

137 | Wolf, 1997, 376.

“The citizen in South Yemen lived under police surveillance all day, from the moment he left the house to his return. [...]”¹³⁸

(South Yemeni contemporary witness, 1993)

According to Arab diplomatic observers of the time, “the survival of the current regime of the PDRY highly depends on the behavior of the police and the military.”¹³⁹ Thus, the new regime focused on the reform of the military, the police, and the establishment of a security apparatus right away, aided by extensive support from the Eastern Bloc. While the Soviet Union and Cuba provided for the “hard facts” of the security apparatus, that is, military equipment and training, East Berlin held back with material deliveries and rather covered the “civil” side of security by promoting the connection between the party and security apparatus, the state, and society.

The Kremlin acknowledged the new regime’s need for military efficiency and support early on and ushered the reform of South Yemen’s army, the Popular Defence Forces (PDF), to finally wrestle the military forces from the “tribal” grip and bring them under the NF’s control. While the army system more and more resembled the Soviet model, Cuba actively trained new military personnel. From 1972 to 1978, the total numbers in the country were raised from 14,000 to 24,000 trained soldiers. The GDR’s contribution in material has to be considered modest, and in firepower even insignificant. This followed the idea of a “division of labor” between Moscow and the GDR, between the military and the civil side of state-building. However, as part of the establishment of a state security apparatus and the equipping of its armed forces, mutual visits of high-ranking military personnel and a certain volume of equipment deliveries by the GDR at times played a highly symbolic part in the Soviet and East German policy of communist state-building.

In May 1972, the PDRY’s Minister of the Interior Mutia¹⁴⁰ visited East Berlin and met with the GDR’s inner circle of the security apparatus.¹⁴¹ Even though the Ministry of the Interior and the MfS agreed that they were neither willing nor able to “satisfy [all of] Minister Mutia’s wishes,” GDR Minister of Defense Hoffmann was asked to decide whether to supply the PDRY with air defense, land mines and ammunition for “weapons already delivered to the PDRY.”¹⁴² The first delivery of fire arms, ammunition, vehicles, as well as related equipment

138 | Al-Adhal, Husayn Sulayman, 1993, 408, in: Dresch, 2000, 146.

139 | Information über die Lage in der Volksrepublik Südjemen, September 4 1969, in: BStU HV A Nr.151, 175.

140 | Muhammad Saleh Yafi Muti’a.

141 | Aktenvermerk Treffen Genosse Minister Mielke mit Genosse Minister Armeegeneral Hoffmann, in: BStU MfS HV A Nr.778, 1-2.

142 | In detail, the delivery included about 100 GAZ-69 (light Soviet army trucks), 1800 9 mm pistols, 150 7,62 mm MG RPK and 1000 AK-47 as well as sixteen 14,5 mm Fla-Lafetten (anti-air gun carriage); exact designations: LMG 7,62mm; SMG 7,62 mm, FlaMG

was ordered in July 1971. This shipment had been decided on behalf of Moscow as part of a significant Soviet delivery.¹⁴³ This indicates that Moscow had been showing at least some interest in South Yemen significantly earlier than 1977. This first relevant arms delivery in 1972 by East Germany included light Soviet army trucks, 1,800 pistols, 150 machine guns for air defense, 1,000 AK-47 rifles, and 16 anti-air gun carriages.¹⁴⁴ The majority of this kind of arms export in the sense of “military aid” was provided by the GDR’s Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of State Security. An MfS IM, positioned in the Ministry of the Interior in the GDR, reports about 57 Valuta Marks worth of arms supply in the period between 1970 and October 1979. According to IM “Dieter Gerlach,” South Yemen received the biggest share of arms by the Ministry of the Interior among all other recipient states. He lists 719 heavy weapons, 26,730 handguns, and about 90,000 grenades¹⁴⁵ sent to the PDRY until 1980.

The GDR’s Military Contributions: Worth More Than Just Its Numbers

Even though East Berlin’s involvement in the security sector provided only some training and deliveries of mostly basic and sometimes outdated equipment, there was more to these efforts than their sheer numbers. First, they have to be interpreted in the context of Moscow’s military and state-building policy in South Yemen and second, as part of the GDR’s wider strategy toward South Yemen’s security, including legal affairs, jurisdiction, and the establishment of both a regular and a secret police. The first major steps in state-building for security matters were made in legal affairs. In 1971, GDR Minister of Justice Kurt Wünsche invited his South Yemeni colleague¹⁴⁶ and the two states agreed on long-term judicial cooperation, including a Treaty on Juridical Assistance that remained in force throughout the GDR’s existence.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, Aden itself had asked East Berlin for support with the establishment of its police force, including training and equipment.¹⁴⁸ As part of the establishment for the Committee of State Security of the PDRY (KfS), East Berlin organized and implemented the education and preparatory training of the KfS personnel. Thus all in all, East German material support for the PDRY has to be considered a political

14,5 mm, Pak 57, RPG 7, no quantity, in: Aktenvermerk Treffen Genosse Minister Mielke mit Genosse Minister Armeegeneral Hoffmann, in: BStU MfS HV A Nr.778, 2.

143 | Lieferungen von Waffen und Ausrüstungen in die Demokratisch Volksrepublik Jemen, in: BStU MfS Sekretariat des Ministers 668, 6.

144 | Ibid., 7.

145 | IM “Dieter Gerlach,” in: BStU MfS HA VII 5012, 4ff.

146 | Brief Geibel an Süß, February 23 1971, in: MfAA C 3858, 1.

147 | Bericht über den Aufenthalt der Studiendelegation des Ministeriums der Justiz in der VDR Jemen in der Zeit vom 14.–25.2.1988 [sic!], February 26 1988, in: BStU MfS Abt.X Nr.234, Teil 1 von 2, 195; Treaty on Juridical Assistance April 1st 1971, in: BStU MfS HA IX Nr. 13694.

148 | Brief Winzer an Dickel, December 1968, sine diem, Beziehungen zur Polizei und innerer Organe der Volksrepublik Südjemen, PA AA, MfAA, C 76073, 15ff.

symbol of respect toward the South Yemen security apparatus and to build up trust and personal friendships. As a consequence, the military deliveries described above have to be interpreted within the context of East Berlin's wider strategy on the civilian side of state-building with its focus on the establishment of comprehensive security apparatus stretching into society, similar to the GDR.

Cooperation between the Stasi and Its South Yemeni Counterpart

Interestingly, the Stasi had become involved even before the South Yemeni constitution was launched. The first agreement between the East German MfS and its South Yemeni counterpart KfS¹⁴⁹ was already signed on November 6 1970,¹⁵⁰ whereas the first MfS officer had been active in South Yemen starting in February 1970.¹⁵¹ These early contacts had been initiated by South Yemen and its minister of the Interior Mohammad Saleh Yafa'i. The first meeting between him and high-ranking officials of the GDR's security apparatus, including Mielke himself, had taken place in late 1969 in Berlin.¹⁵² The first shipment of technical equipment for telecommunication for the KfS was delivered in 1974.¹⁵³

Relations between the two interior ministries developed in parallel to the relations between the two security services, including a significant number of advisors and regular mutual visits of delegations.¹⁵⁴ This kind of "state-building synergy" probably saved a considerable amount of money and personnel. Nonetheless, the whole process of establishing a security apparatus, including its armed forces, demanded a significant quantity of equipment and financial aid. Reliable numbers for the money spent on "deliveries" for this sector during the building phase from 1971 to 1977 are available. Putting these numbers in relation to the GDR's overall spending on financial, material, and personnel support for "young nation states" between the years of 1967 and 1976 clearly shows East German preferences: While the full spending of this decade adds up to about 105 million East German Marks,

149 | The Section Revolutionary Security Service. German: Revolutionärer Sicherheitsdienst (RSD), Zur Lage des MfS der VDR Jemen, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 96.

150 | "To develop and deepen the cooperation established with the agreement of November 6 1970," in: Vereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem Komitee für Staatssicherheit der VDRJ, November 25 1980, in: BStU MfS Abt. X 1789, 1.

151 | Zu den Beziehungen des MfS der VDRJ mit dem MfS der DDR und mit Sicherheitsorganen anderer Länder, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 102.

152 | Ibid., 329f.

153 | Maßnahmen zur solidarischen Unterstützung der Sicherheitsorgane der VDR Jemen, May 2 1988, in: BStU Sekretariat Schwanitz 24, 5.

154 | Zur Lage des MfS der VDR Jemen; Kadersituation des MfS der VDR Jemen in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 104.

including about six million Valuta Marks,¹⁵⁵ the GDR's MfS used more than half of this amount for South Yemen.¹⁵⁶ 1971-72 were the years of highest MfS spending in Aden of the period under review.¹⁵⁷ Of this, the two biggest spending categories, with almost half of the amount spent on were vehicles, arms and ammunition. Another quarter was spent on communications technology. East Germany mostly delivered equipment for special forces from their BCD Section,¹⁵⁸ the Armament and Chemical Service Section. Between 1971-1977, the deliveries from this section equaled nearly six million VM,¹⁵⁹ and another eight million VM were planned for the period from 1977 to 1980, demonstrating that the material engagement was kept up even beyond the early years of the establishment of the South Yemeni KfS.

In 1972 the Revolutionary Security Service Section was formed in the KfS and Muhammad Said Abdallah Muhsin (Muhsin)¹⁶⁰ became its minister. He served in this post until 1979 and thus was able to accompany and direct the whole establishment process of South Yemen's Secret Service. Mushin, a close acquaintance of Ismail throughout his career, greeted the material support by the MfS and worked closely with East German State Security and its advisors. During Muhsin's reign, the PDRY's security apparatus was expanded successively and gradually entered into the civilian sphere.

An example for Muhsin's policies that mirrored East German measures was a new law banning any unauthorized contact with foreigners. In 1975, this law was mostly directed at Western diplomats. In a letter from Sana'a, West German ambassador Günter Held reports on behalf of the West German charge d'affaires in Aden, Alexander Mühlen, about the "restrictions of individual liberties in the PDRY":

"a) Directed by the GDR, the omnipresent KfS 'interviews' every local who has been seen sitting at the table with foreigners. b) Local visitors of foreign representations only have access on the grounds of an official pass issued by the Foreign Ministry [...]; this is also the case for the local domestic workers. Thus unofficially employed workers had to be replaced by governmentally accredited ones. c) This policy is

155 | "The foreign exchange component of the GDR's aid was calculated in 'Valuta Marks.' One VM corresponded to the amount of GDR Marks that would be needed to obtain one unit of convertible currency through the export of GDR goods," in: Howell, 1994, FN 7, 307.

156 | *Hilfeleistungen gegenüber jungen Nationalstaaten auf nichtzivilen Gebiet. Übersicht über Ausgaben [...] von 1967 bis 1976, Abt. Finanzen an HV A/III, 26. April 1977, in: BStU MfS Abt. Finanzen Nr. 1393, 152 and 164.* This high percentage is reached despite rather modest spending on the PDRY between 1967 and 1970.

157 | *Ibid.*, 166.

158 | BCD - Abteilung Bewaffnung und Chemischer Dienst.

159 | Wertmäßige Übersicht über Lieferungen in die VDR Jemen 1971-1977, Berlin, November 2 1977, in: BStU MfS BCD Nr. 2854, 134.

160 | Arabic: Muḥammad Sayyid 'Abdallāh Muḥsin.

expressed in the new Penal Code of the PDRY. It dedicates one full chapter of its Special Section¹⁶¹ (Art. 110-120, 126) to contacts with foreigners. It introduces 'private contact with foreigners (Art.113),' sharing of economic information with foreigners (Art.115), and the acceptance of tips from foreigners as criminal offences with a minimum penalty of one year imprisonment, being extended to up to five years, if espionage or treason cannot be proven (Art.120)."¹⁶²

Clearly, the intention behind these laws was to eliminate the political opposition by prosecuting as many of them as possible on the grounds of "espionage" and "treason." The law was complemented by more concrete measures like a wall around the embassies and the diplomatic quarter¹⁶³ which also aimed to isolate Westerners from the population.¹⁶⁴

But the South Yemeni KfS did not settle for mere observance and the exertion of control. Muhsin's years as minister of the KfS even "earned him the title of 'the butcher' and references to arbitrary imprisonments and executions by the PDRY's Secret Service usually refer to his period of service."¹⁶⁵ In the late 1970s, the Aden regime agreed to end Muhsin's excesses for the time being and he was removed from office on the occasion of Salmin's downfall.¹⁶⁶ During Salmin's presidency, one of the main venues of power struggles within the leadership was located at the intersection of state security and the military, more precisely around the person of Muhsin himself. Brehony claims that before Muhsin was sacked he was responsible for the execution of about 250 of Salmin's followers, all of them military officers, but without due process or the CC's knowledge. In the end Muhsin, a confidant of Ismail, was held responsible and forced to resign.

After Muhsin was removed, his extreme legislation was revised and actual terror of the security apparatus in South Yemen somewhat decreased. However, this did neither decelerate the expansion of the apparatus nor reduce its power. The heyday of Aden's Secret Service as a secret police were yet to come: Over the 1970s, both the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of the interior had steadily increased their influence and power, not least due to East Berlin's intensive advice and assistance during the process of their creation.

161 | German: Besonderer Teil; The PDRY's Penal Code followed the East (and also West) German model of dividing the Penal Code in a General and a Special Section.

162 | Botschafter Held, Sanaa, an das Auswärtige Amt, June 3 1976, in: AzAP der BRD, 1976, Vol.1, 1.Januar bis 30.Juni, FN 3, 807.

163 | In the beginning, the wall even affected the East German embassy, though this was quickly remedied, in: Botschafter Held, Sanaa, an das Auswärtige Amt, June 3 1976, in: AzAP der BRD, 1976, Vol.1, 1.Januar bis 30.Juni, 807; Scharfenberg, 2012.

164 | Kutschera, 1982, 22; Brehony, 2013, 63.

165 | Security Services, in: Burrowes, 2010, 346; also see: Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 67.

166 | Ismail/Ismail, 1985, 67f.

4. CONCLUSION: SOUTH YEMEN AS THE MODEL CASE OF A POSSIBLE EAST GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

The second phase of Soviet engagement was characterized by an increasing level of intensity, while the focus on the two major fields of engagement, the military and ideology, was upheld. Clearly, it was not only the beginning, but also the “high times” of Soviet-South Yemeni relations. In less than a decade, the USSR had become the most important political, economic, and ideological ally for the isolated PDRY. But Aden also could claim a value for Moscow beyond its political importance, such as the unofficial military and naval base on the Horn of Africa. “Neither the Soviets nor the South Yemenis gave much publicity to [their] military cooperation, but they loudly played up the economic and technical [assistance].”¹⁶⁷ While the former type of cooperation clearly aimed to support the Moscow-friendly regime – both to keep it in place and forge it into yet another Soviet ally – the latter served no other purpose. Support for the fishing industry, maintenance and expansion of the naval facilities, and education with an ideological focus: During the 1970s, Moscow’s intentions did not have much to do with South Yemen’s needs.

In tune with both Moscow’s awakening interest in South Yemen as a potential military partner in the region and with Aden’s clear commitment to Marxism-Leninism, the second phase of East German engagement has to be considered the most comprehensive with regard to the extent of socialist state- and nation-building. The fifth NF Party Congress of 1972 interpreted the new constitution in a way that assured East Berlin of the Aden’s willingness to go all the way in becoming socialist state and, from the GDR’s point of view, go beyond the lip-service of many other Arab regimes evoking socialist rhetoric. Even a future merger of the few remaining political organizations with the NF, now called UNFPO, was a possibility. The Aden regime seemed to fully agree with the East German interpretation of the “integration of society” as “homogenization” and the GDR offered its advice and expertise on how to bring Aden’s diverse media landscape under tight party control. With East German help, the control of the press and public opinion was ensured by the network of South Yemen’s Ministry for State Security, growing denser and denser throughout the 1970s.

All in all, the numbers of advisors and experts remained constant over several years¹⁶⁸ and even increased later in the decade after the founding of the YSP. Therefore, Phase II is characterized by a continuous intensification of the GDR’s level of engagement, but also a diversification of fields of engagement. An extraordinary example of this is the field of foreign policy. Though not a field of engagement directly associated

167 | Yodfat, 1983, 112.

168 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberatertätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 46.

with the concept of state- and nation-building, which on first glance is focused on change within a country's borders, foreign policy is an important field at least in *socialist* state- and nation-building. Marxist-Leninist ideology, as propagated by Andrei Zhdanov's "Two-Camp Theory,"¹⁶⁹ is based on a dual *weltbild* of capitalist/imperialist and socialist/anti-imperialist states. As a consequence of the Cold War and its Marxist-Leninist interpretation, a state's political stance in international relations serves two purposes with regard to its internal process of state- and nation-building. First, the identity of the state's population in the sense of a national identity may be forged as the righteous socialist "self" against the malicious "capitalist" or "reactionary" "other". Second, a feeling of belonging is created among the state's population as members of a bigger community, the community of socialist states. The founding of the YSP and the regime's commitment to the Soviet Bloc had sealed the PDRY's isolation in the region and the Arab world, depriving South Yemen of other options in the international sphere. Thus, asking for East German foreign policy guidance shows South Yemeni desire for security and its wish to be accepted in the Socialist community of states. For the GDR, however, granting this wish has to be considered an important building block of socialist state- and nation-building in Yemen.

The GDR's high level of engagement during this time in almost every social and political field was promoted by two dynamics that seemed to oppose each other, but rather were mutually dependent. On the one hand, the PDRY had clearly turned to the socialist camp. West Germany had withdrawn from South Yemen and Moscow signaled not only its approval of East German activities, but even developed some interest of its own in the location.¹⁷⁰ On the other hand, new state and non-state actors perceived as "imperialist" by the socialist camp became involved in South Yemeni affairs, including United Nations advisors and experts from Western countries, as well as representatives from the International Monetary Fund. East Berlin ascertained: "[O]ur advisors and their thoughts and ideas have to prevail [against Western orientations]."¹⁷¹ This motivation of fending off "imperialist advancements" tied in neatly with East Berlin's strategy of the "honest broker" and clearly goaded East German engagement in socialist state- and nation-building.

An impressive number of East German actors were engaged in South Yemen early on: The embassy; the party and its mass organizations like the East German

169 | Zhdanov, Andrei, party secretary of the CPSU, in September 1947, Zhdanov answers Harry S. Truman at the Conference of Communist Party of Europe, Speech in: Lautemann/Schlenke (Ed.) 1980, 156 f.

170 | Letter Scharfenberg and Grünheid, Ministry of Planning, January 1 1974, in: PA AA, MfAA, 166276, 79.

171 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberaterstätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276, 38.

Trade Union (FDGB) and the youth organization FDJ; advisor groups and experts; and the members of the East German-Arab Society of Friendship and the PDRY-GDR Society of Friendship, who officially connected in 1974.¹⁷² Throughout the 1970s, the actors in South Yemen demanded even more qualified cadres and experts for advice on nation- and state-building. Most of these requests were granted to as far an extent as possible.¹⁷³ This also exemplifies the supposedly high priority of the GDR's involvement. All of them were part of a highly diversified structure of control, directed from East Berlin, coordinated by the embassy in Aden and watched closely by Stasi officers and IMs. Considering that the Soviet KfS did not add any material support and training until 1974,¹⁷⁴ the East German MfS undeniably performed pioneer work. With the benefit of hindsight, this second phase of East German engagement may be considered the heart and heydays of East German socialist state- and nation-building, as it enhanced the Aden regime's endeavors and culminated in the founding of the South Yemeni vanguard party, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), in 1978.

172 | Scharfenberg, 2012, 42.

173 | Einschätzung der Ergebnisse der bisherigen DDR-Regierungsberatertätigkeit mit Schlußfolgerungen für das weitere Vorgehen auf diesem Gebiet in der VDRJ, June 27 1972; WTZ-Protokoll 74/75 by HA FTZ Entwicklungsländer HA-Leiter Sachse, November 6 1974, in: PA AA, MfAA, C 156276.

174 | Zur Lage des MfS der VDR Jemen, Kadersituation des MfS der VDR Jemen, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 234, Part 1 of 2, 96.

