

# **CHAPTER 13. Phase III: The Phase of Continuity and Consolidation**

## **The GDR in Yemen from 1978 to 1986: German Guidance and Yemeni Emancipation**

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The second phase of East German foreign policy in the 1970s established the GDR as a reliable supporter of the state- and nation-building process in Aden. Internal developments in the PDRY during the 1970s culminated in one particular event: The founding of the YSP and installation of Ismail as its secretary-general concluded the development of the former revolutionary movement NLF to a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party. The founding Congress of the YSP has to be regarded as the final catalyst for the intensification of South Yemeni relations with the Eastern Bloc in general and East Germany in particular, as engagement between the states reached a new level in the early 1980s. The following chapter captures the major contributions of the GDR to the state-building process in South Arabia with a focus on the party-centered political system, economic aid, the media, and the security apparatus.

### **1. ADEN HOVERING BETWEEN THE PEAK AND ABYSS OF ITS POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **1.1 The Left Prevails and then falls Apart: The New Vanguard between “Individualism” and “Collective Leadership”**

“The Yemeni Socialist Party is the vanguard of the Yemeni working-class [...].”<sup>1</sup>  
(Party Program of the YSP, 1978)

The internal struggles between Salmin’s followers and his opposition finally erupted in a political and military crisis in June 1978. The establishment of a Soviet-style vanguard party and thus the long-term alignment of the PDRY with the Eastern Bloc had by no means been an unchallenged development. After

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**1** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr.27368, 4-11.

Salmin's execution and Ali Nasir's six-month presidency, Ismail, the party's chief ideologue, succeeded him as president to direct the "Founding Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party" from 11-13 October, 1978, in Aden.<sup>2</sup> All in all, the event may be considered an act of consolidation of the "former left" and the keystone of the implementation of "democratic centralism"<sup>3</sup> as the fundamental principle of the political system. Ismail opened the Congress with a speech clearly declaring the YSP a Marxist-Leninist vanguard party with close ties to Moscow.<sup>4</sup>

However, this clear commitment came at a cost to Aden. Scharfenberg quotes Nicolas Chaoui, former leader of the Lebanese Communist Party, on the matter:

"Abdel Fattah Ismail explained to him, Chaoui that it would depend on the [financial and political support of the Soviet Union and its Socialist brother states], whether the vanguard party was to be founded or not."<sup>5</sup>

Explicit South Yemeni demands for compensation for actual and perceived loss due to the opting for the "progressive path" emerged as an important argument within Aden's policy towards the Eastern Bloc and remained a central feature until the very end of the PDRY's existence.

From 1978 onward, Ismail, Ali Nasir and Minister of State Security Muhsin advanced as the state's leading figures. Now the former "left" was firmly established as the leading faction. But the political differences within the regime already began to show and a new rift emerged between idealistic Ismail and pragmatic Ali Nasir, who only reluctantly had left his presidency to Ismail. First, Ali Nasir was by far more popular with the Yemeni youth. Compared to Ismail, Ali Nasir regularly is described as an appealing public speaker:

"His speeches contrast sharply with those of Ismail and Salmin. They are expressed in simple and direct language, and discuss how policies should be applied, rather than ideas and ideology"<sup>6</sup>.

However, during the locking of horns which followed, it was tribal ties that decided the outcome. Ever since South Yemen's declaration of independence, political mobilization, and thus power, gradually had shifted from Aden and Aden Colony to its hinterland. In 1979, Ali Nasir "made moves [...] to win over

**2** | The creation of the YSP included a merger of the NF, or NFPO as it was called at the time, and the other leftist forces in the country, namely the PDU and the Ba'athists, Gambke et al., 1974, 103; Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 37.

**3** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr.27368, 10.

**4** | Grünberg, 2012, 60. On the party structures of the YSP see: Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 38ff.

**5** | In: Scharfenberg, 2012, 50.

**6** | Brehony, 2013, 122.

Salmin's remaining supporters,”<sup>7</sup> while he could rely on wide support from his home region Abyan. Even the powerful Governor of Abyan, Muhammad Ali Ahmad, was counted among his supporters. Ismail had migrated from Yemen's north and had never been able to establish a home base and constituency in the south. Coinciding with intensifying social pressure due to economic hardships, the struggle soon was decided. Ismail's opponents blamed the economic problems and political isolation on Ismail's overly theoretical approach to politics. Support for him gradually deteriorated. On the occasion of an extraordinary Party Congress in April 1980, later on named the “Second Congress of the YSP,” Ismail finally was forced to resign. He was sent off to exile in Moscow and Ali Nasir took over: As president, prime minister and secretary general of the YSP.<sup>8</sup>

Even though Ali Nasir did not much to change the existing state structures, he “operated them differently [than Ismail].”<sup>9</sup> Under his presidency, the idea of “collective leadership” faded into the background. While Ali Nasir made his mark as a charismatic leading figure, he seemed to aim at disempowering the former revolutionaries in the leadership by drawing from Salmin's former supporters.<sup>10</sup> MfS documents describe the Second YSP Congress of 1980 as a generational change in the YSP in general and the Central Committee in particular. According to this document, the new leadership mostly relied on younger cadres “educated in the USSR and other [socialist] countries [...], some of them [even had] received profound Marxist-Leninist instructions.”<sup>11</sup> Of the “old guard” only Ali Nasir and Ali Ahmad Nasir al-Antar (Ali Antar)<sup>12</sup> remained in the YSP's inner circle.

In the meantime, the rift that had appeared within the YSP between the pragmatic Ali Nasir and the ideologue Ismail progressed regardless of Ismail's absence, even though he had received unexpected support from al-Beidh and Ali Antar. Although the latter had played a significant part in Ismail's removal from his posts in 1980, he sided with Ali Nasir's opponents, and thus with his former adversary Ismail, soon after. As a consequence, Ali Antar, at the time minister of defense as well, had to leave the country in 1981 and was suspended soon thereafter. From then on, he had to content himself with a minor post. Finally al-Beidh, firmly rooted in and supported by his home base Hadhramawt<sup>13</sup> and Ali Antar's constituency in Lahj, began to form a new alliance in 1982. Copying the criticism against Salmin, al-Beidh and Ali Antar both demanded Ali Nasir to yield some of his powers. According to them, Nasir was ignoring the principles of

<sup>7</sup> | Ibid., 110.

<sup>8</sup> | Burrowes, 2010, 27f; Dresch, 2000, 151.

<sup>9</sup> | Brehony, 2013, 122.

<sup>10</sup> | Halliday, 2002, 46.

<sup>11</sup> | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 149.

<sup>12</sup> | Arabic: <sup>ف</sup>ال<sup>ي</sup>ا<sup>ل</sup>ي<sup>ا</sup>م<sup>د</sup> ن<sup>ا</sup>س<sup>ي</sup>ر<sup>ا</sup>ن<sup>ت</sup>ار<sup>ا</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> | Arabic: ح<sup>اد</sup>ر<sup>ام</sup>ا<sup>و</sup>ت<sup>ه</sup>.

“democratic centralism” and “collective leadership.” In addition to that, one may speculate that Muhsin, former minister of state security, kept contact with Ismail in Moscow from his post as South Yemeni ambassador in Budapest, so that the Kremlin might have had a hand in the rehabilitation of Ismail’s standing.<sup>14</sup> In the end, the chief ideologue of the YSP was allowed to return. However, conflict was far from over. Disagreement and competition between the factions kept smoldering, until a fierce, full-fledged civil war erupted in January 1986.

## 1.2 Economy and Public Welfare in the mid-1980s: South Yemen’s Golden Years or Struggle for Survival?

Even before the “1986 crisis,” South Yemen’s economy was weak, with the PDRY ranking among the poorest countries in the world. Living conditions nonetheless had somewhat improved in the early 1980s.<sup>15</sup> National GDP and household consumption expenditures both had risen steadily, the latter from about \$55 Million in 1972 to almost \$300 Million in 1982.<sup>16</sup> At least in Aden, these years usually are remembered as a time of political stability and general public welfare by Yemenis and foreigners alike who were living in the Yemeni capital. In his short account of the South Yemeni state of development, Lewis summarizes: “During the 1970s, national industrial production rose fivefold as a result of the opening of factories.”<sup>17</sup> The majority of industrialization was subsidized with money from the Eastern Bloc. But economic growth was not about to last.

Soon enough the PDRY arrived at its limits of expansion. The factories again drew immigrant workers and by the end of the decade, population and industrial growth had exceeded the capacity of South Yemeni infrastructure. Concentrated in the two most developed areas, Aden and Mukhalla,<sup>18</sup> average industrial productivity and efficiency for South Yemen remained low. This was not about to change easily due to a lack of natural resources, inadequate infrastructure,<sup>19</sup> a low level of education, and poor quality of equipment. Despite a modest growth of industrial production, agriculture remained the main economic sector with the

**14** | Brehony, 2013, 131f; Also see below.

**15** | On economic reforms and central planning in the PDRY see: Lackner, 1985, 149-169.

**16** | UN Data, Former Democratic Yemen.

**17** | Fivefold in comparison to production right after the British had left which equaled almost zero [comment: author], in: Lewis, 1987, 362.

**18** | Lewis gives estimates of the urban population of South Yemen’s biggest cities in 1987: Aden (350,000), Mukhalla (50,000), Seiyun (22,000), Tarim (21,000), in: Lewis, 1987, 362.

**19** | The 1st governorate (Aden), the southern parts of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th governorate and parts of the 5th governorate were connected with main roads, and a paved road connected Aden and Sana'a. The Aden airport offered direct flights to Moscow, Addis Abeba, Kuwait, Jeddah, Bombay (Mumbai) and Sana'a.

Soviet-financed fishery providing the biggest share of exports.<sup>20</sup> More than half of the total of about 350,000 to 400,000 South Yemeni adults worked in fishery and agriculture.<sup>21</sup> Especially after a disastrous flood in 1982 that caused damage of more than \$1 billion,<sup>22</sup> agricultural production could not keep up with population growth, creating the most pressing problem for the South Yemeni economy: To feed its own population, massive imports were needed.<sup>23</sup>

East German reports offer quite a detailed picture of the condition of infrastructure, housing and the economy in general,<sup>24</sup> even though they also impose a Socialist perspective on the reader. According to East German analysts, South Yemeni society in the mid-1980s was still far from fulfilling socialist ideals, especially with regard to Marxist-Leninist requirements for the emergence of a revolutionary proletariat. Right after the declaration of independence, the Adeni working class “numbered only a few thousand.”<sup>25</sup> About fifteen years later, the situation had not changed much. By including state employees, the YSP considered about 150,000 people “working class.” The SED, however, appeared to have been more strict with its socialist approach and merely counted a modest 35,000 to 40,000 as “wage-working proletariat.”<sup>26</sup>

Unfortunately, East German reports judge the fundamental changes enforced by the NF/YSP in terms of the East German understanding of “planned development of socialism,”<sup>27</sup> while the actual economic outcome and efficiency remain secondary. An example of this is the extremely positive view of the increasing socialization of industry, while the disastrous “economic and financial situation” is described as merely “strained.”<sup>28</sup> This must be considered a massive understatement. Despite some economic progress, South Yemen’s economy in

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**20** | About 40 per cent, in: *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed*, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 162.

**21** | *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed*, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 160.

**22** | Burrowes, 2010, 258; Lewis, 1987, 362.

**23** | *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed*, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 161.

**24** | *Ibid.*, 136.

**25** | Na’ana, Hamida, *The Homeland*, Garnet, Reading, 1988, in: Dresch, 2000, 120.

**26** | In addition to the apparent lack of “workers” in the sense of the word, the biggest part of the work force was not to be found in the country anyway. Just like today, a considerable part of Yemeni employees at the time, about 250,000, worked abroad, sending home the PDRY’s lion’s share of foreign currency and somewhat keeping alive the economy.

**27** | Schroeder, 1999, 119ff; Schroeder, 2013, 110ff.

**28** | *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed*, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 159.

the early 1980s was built on the unsteady ground of a debt of \$1.2 billion.<sup>29</sup> State survival depended on further financial credits, the two biggest lenders being Moscow with about a quarter of the funding and the World Bank with about a tenth. On top of that, the ever prevailing hope to find oil to save the economy was not to be fulfilled before 1986.<sup>30</sup> The discoveries simply happened too late to buffer the humanitarian and economic catastrophes of the “1986 January crisis” and severe flooding that occurred afterwards.<sup>31</sup>

## 2. ADEN: A SOVIET “FIRST-PRIORITY GOAL” IN THE ARAB WORLD

“[Soviet assistance should be reserved only for] our most important, justified and first-priority goals. It [...] should go first of all to the state with the explicit and consistent socialist orientation. I have in mind such states as the People’s Republic of Yemen, Ethiopia, Angola, Afghanistan and some others.”<sup>32</sup>

(Leonid Brezhnev, November 1978)

During the 1970s, the South Yemeni leadership repeatedly stressed that the aid and assistance they received were insufficient. The leadership made it known that their future steps towards the Eastern Bloc highly depended on a possible improvement of their situation.<sup>33</sup> By 1976, the PDRY had not received any assistance from the ČSSR yet, while Poland and Hungary had merely sent delegations under a UN mandate.<sup>34</sup> But despite Aden’s complaints, not much happened until the YSP was formed. Salmin’s execution finally freed the way for the establishment of the Marxist-Leninist vanguard party, boosting South Yemen’s relations with the Eastern Bloc in general and Moscow and East Berlin in particular. Without doubt, the creation of the YSP was a Soviet interest, and Soviet advisors and functionaries had done their share to express this wish.<sup>35</sup>

With the installation of a rather dependent and thus loyal vanguard party at the center of South Yemen’s political system, the inherently unpredictable PDRY transformed into a somewhat more reliable ally for Moscow. The Kremlin clearly

**29** | National debt of 1980, in: *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...]* Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 165.

**30** | Burrowes, 2010, 280.

**31** | *Ibid.*, 258.

**32** | Brezhnev, Leonid, November 22 1978, Opening the session of the Political Advisory Committee of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, The Intervention in Afghanistan and the fall of Détente – A Chronology, in: *The Carter-Brezhnev-Project*, The National Security Archive.

**33** | Information über einige innen- und außenpolitische Entwicklungstendenzen in der VDR Jemen, September 14 1976, in: BStU MfS HV A Nr. 125, 22.

**34** | *Ibid.* 22.

**35** | Cigar, 1985, 780.

signaled its wish to keep the YSP regime in power by backing it with a more efficient and loyal military. Soviet military aid doubled between 1978-79 to about \$250 million,<sup>36</sup> while the first “young officers educated in [Bulgaria, Cuba, GDR the ČSSR and Romania] were about to report for duty.”<sup>37</sup> By the mid-1980s, South Yemeni military had shed its British skin and reformed “along Soviet lines,” including close party ties and Soviet control by integration of party officials.<sup>38</sup>

“All military forces [of the PDRY] are equipped with modern, mostly Soviet, engineering. The comprehensive deliveries of arms by the Soviet Union are either granted on the basis of long-term credits or without any financial payment in return. The USSR provides the lion’s share of the political, material, and financial support of the PDRY’s armed forces.”<sup>39</sup>

An estimate of about 1,000 Soviet advisors in the state and party apparatus were supported by another 500 Cuban experts who trained South Yemeni militia and police, while East Germany’s delegates from the defense, interior and security ministries were active in the establishment of the security and judicial apparatus.

## 2.1 Intention to Stay: Stable Relations Between Moscow and Aden

Before his death, one of the last international visits Brezhnev made was his trip to Aden in May 1982. It was followed by a communiqué in September that praised the PDRY’s advancement on “the road of socialist orientation.”<sup>40</sup> Regardless of Moscow’s policy change toward the YAR and possible Yemeni unity, the signed communiqué clearly illustrates the stability of USSR-PDRY relations during this period, demarcated by the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and the crisis of 1986. In this phase, bilateral relations were consolidated and the Soviets intended to stay: In early 1985, the USSR officially established a “link [from South Yemen] to the Soviet Intersputnik satellite communications network,”<sup>41</sup> which meant installing a direct hotline between Aden and Moscow. In context of the HV A project “Netzwerk 3,” the installation of an East German radio surveillance base starting in 1983, this engagement has to be interpreted as a long-term commitment

<sup>36</sup> | Brehony, 2013, 115.

<sup>37</sup> | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 166.

<sup>38</sup> | Cigar, 1985, 778.

<sup>39</sup> | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 166.

<sup>40</sup> | Halliday, 1990, 197.

<sup>41</sup> | Dienstreisebericht der HA III, 15 February 1984 (Aktion “Netzwerk 3”), in: BStU MfS HA III 8873. At the time US\$1 and 1 Rubel were of about the same worth in the world economy.

to South Yemen. Also, Soviet financial and economic commitments increased significantly. In 1984, the GDR reported about a secret increase of Soviet aid to the PDRY “of another 2 billion rubles.”<sup>42</sup> This quote suggests that there had been a comparable amount of aid prior to this second secret loan. Soviet support for the YSP regime in this phase clearly was clearly much more than the official loan in 1985 of about 384 million rubles.<sup>43</sup>

The secret loan clearly fits the shift of Soviet economic policy towards Aden: The Kremlin had begun to include South Yemeni economy in its Comecon plans.<sup>44</sup> As a reaction, the YSP officially opted to decrease imports from “imperialist countries.”<sup>45</sup> The actual decline of Aden’s non-socialist foreign trade from 70 percent to about 56 percent in 1983<sup>46</sup> underlines the mutual agreement between the USSR and the PDRY to draw Aden closer to the Eastern Bloc economically. So far, the support of South Yemen merely served geostrategic purposes. But Moscow and East Berlin both were hoping for more concrete economic benefits from their engagement. “Encouraging signs near Shabwah,”<sup>47</sup> as well as rumors about an actual oil find by Italy,<sup>48</sup> were cause for new hope for more concrete benefits for the Eastern Bloc from its engagement in South Yemen. Supported by the GDR and ČSSR, Soviet companies increased their efforts in their search for oil, a line of action that was to be continued even after Moscow’s change of leadership to Gorbachev.<sup>49</sup>

## 2.2 Why the Kremlin let go of Its Ally Ismail: Moscow’s Support for Ali Nasir

In 1980, the Soviet Union at first apparently attempted to save its ally, Ismail, who had just received the Soviet Order of Friendship among Peoples the year before.<sup>50</sup> But soon enough it became obvious that Ismail lacked the necessary support for leadership among his own peers. As a consequence, the Kremlin accepted Ismail’s removal from office and Moscow explicitly supported Ali Nasir’s leadership. When taking a closer look at Moscow’s interests at the time, this move does follow a certain logic. Ali Nasir was not unknown to the USSR and he was fully aware of the importance of a healthy South Yemeni-Soviet relationship for the PDRY. Furthermore, this change

**42** | Ibid.

**43** | Cigar, 1985, 778.

**44** | Ibid., 778.

**45** | Information über die Entwicklung in der VDR Jemen, in: BStU MfS HV A 81, August 1978, Part I of I, Nr. 35/78, 110ff.

**46** | Cigar, 1985, 778.

**47** | Dresch, 2000, 161.

**48** | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 163.

**49** | Brehony, 2013, 145.

**50** | Ibid. 120.

at the top of the YSP might even have been of a certain political convenience for the Kremlin. After the Camp David Accords, power in the region again was shifting towards Washington and its allies. Moscow needed to improve its relations with its former enemies. During this phase, the USSR performed a noticeable policy change in the region, including its first advances towards Saudi Arabia, something Ismail never supported. Furthermore, Moscow sent the first significant arms supplies to Sana'a, and Ali Abdallah Saleh, who was close to Ali Nasir, visited Moscow.

Apart from Moscow's overtures to Saudi Arabia and the Kremlin's hope for a more "progressive" leadership in the YAR, the additional major cause for this policy change might be found in the current socio-political condition of the PDRY: After a decade of consolidation, the Kremlin considered South Yemen's political system politically stabilized, that is, ruled by a vanguard party of Marxist-Leninist orientation.<sup>51</sup> Ali Nasir must have appeared as the more predictable alternative to the extremist Ismail: Ali Nasir advocated for moderation towards the neighboring states and with regard to the Palestinian case. This clearly was in Moscow's interest. However, Ali Nasir did not appear to be a Marxist at heart, unlike Ismail. In 1983, Moscow even had to remind Ali Nasir to focus on "the consolidation of [the YSP's] ideological, political, and organizational unity."<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, the Kremlin was sure of Ali Nasir's loyalty and he was not expected to depart from the course of the Marxist-Leninist state.

According to an internal document of the GDR's Ministry of Defense, the PDRY's foreign policy under Ali Nasir's leadership in the early 1980s followed three major premises:<sup>53</sup> First, the promotion of close cooperation with Ethiopia; second, the normalization of relations with the YAR, as opposed to Ismail who repeatedly had been preaching the expansion of the YSP to the north;<sup>54</sup> and third, the improvement of relations with Saudi Arabia. Clearly, Ali Nasir's approach coincided with Moscow's endeavors to keep close ties to Addis Abeba and to win the Saleh regime from Washington for the Eastern Bloc. Furthermore, the PDRY under Ismail's leadership had been far from negotiating, let alone cooperating, with Riyadh or Sana'a. To sum it up, all three of these goals fit in neatly with Moscow's wider strategy for the Horn of Africa after Mengistu's violent coup of 1977.<sup>55</sup> Thus, the change of leadership from Ismail to Ali Nasir has to be considered at least convenient for both Moscow and East Berlin alike – at least

**51** | After two Northern leaders were killed in 1977 and 1978, the comparably unknown Major **Ali Abdallah Saleh** had stepped forward to take over presidency. Dresch, 2000, 143 and 147. Saleh remained president even after unification until he was forced to resign in the course of the so-called Arab Uprisings in early 2012.

**52** | Pravda, November 14 1983, in: Cigar, 1985, 789.

**53** | Angaben zur Außen- und Militärpolitik sowie zur Entwicklung der Streitkräfte der VDR Jemen, January 17 1981, in: BStU MfS ZAIG Nr.5905, 1-6.

**54** | Scharfenberg, 2012, 61.

**55** | Westad, 2005, 271.

when it happened in 1980. In an MfS document from 1984, the vote for Ismail's resignation is considered "the correction of the adventurous course by the [...] the YSP in 1979."<sup>56</sup>

### 3. CONSOLIDATION AND CONTINUITY OF EAST GERMAN STATE-BUILDING: HOW THE GDR's FOREIGN POLICY TIED IN WITH THE YSP'S APPROACH

#### 3.1 The Founding of the YSP: The Keystone of Socialist Nation- and State-Building?

"The visit of the Party and state delegation under leadership of Secretary-General Erich Honecker to the PDRY [in November 1979] and the signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation preluded a new stage of bilateral relations. [...] The close cooperation between the SED and the YSP is taking center stage in the process."<sup>57</sup>

In the formation process of the Soviet-style vanguard party, Aden relied heavily on the support of its closest allies, the USSR and GDR. In 1976, PDRY Foreign Minister Mohammed Saleh Mutia<sup>58</sup> attended the SED's IX. Party Congress in East Berlin,<sup>59</sup> and East German advisors accompanied the preparations for the founding congress of the YSP.

"The German Democratic Republic is a Socialist state based on the German nation. She is the political organization of urban and rural workers who jointly realize Socialism led by the working class and its Marxist-Leninist Party."

(Article 1, Constitution of the GDR, April 6th 1968)

"The YSP, armed with the theory of Scientific Socialism, is the leader and guide of society and the state. [...] The Party] leads the struggle of the people and their mass organizations to [...] finally realize Socialism."<sup>60</sup>

(Article 2, Constitution of the PDRY, October 31st 1978)

**56** | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 142.

**57** | Ibid.175.

**58** | Arabic: Muḥammad Sa‘īd Muti‘ā.

**59** | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 168.

**60** | German Translation: "Bewaffnet mit der Theorie des Wissenschaftlichen Sozialismus ist die Jemenitische Sozialistische Partei Führer der Gesellschaft und des Staates. [...] Sie führt den Kampf des Volkes und seiner Massenorganisationen an, [...] um schließlich den

These two excerpts present the mid- and long-term impact of South Yemen's cooperation with East Germany on the development of the PDRY's political system. With the founding of the YSP, the existing constitution was amended in a fashion undeniably reminiscent of East Germany's constitutional genesis between 1949 and 1968. The YSP's party program of the same year stated:

"The YSP is considered the logic conclusion of the [NF]. [...] Fundamental economic, social and political changes [...] created the prerequisites to transform the political vanguard represented by the [NF] into a new type of party."<sup>61</sup>

From then on, the South Yemeni vanguard party officially claimed to be the highest authority in a centralized state in South Yemeni territory.<sup>62</sup> Without doubt, the GDR's influence on the PDRY's constitution and legal system is not restricted to the first drafts and early years, as it is also relevant to the further constitutional and legal genesis. Throughout the 1970s, state structures had gradually been remolded into East German-style party-state parallelism. Similar to the GDR's Constitution of 1968, the "primacy of the party"<sup>63</sup> was elevated to the highest organizational state principle. The following elections were "fixed," as "people voted for candidates from approved lists"<sup>64</sup> comparable to the GDR. Thus, the "elected" Yemeni Parliament, the SPC, was kept under the tight control of the Politbüro, similar to the "Volkskammer" of the GDR. The institution of the presidium elected by the SPC remained, while all members in personal union also were members of the YSP Central Committee. At the intersection between party and state in South Yemen, a "Council of Ministers" could be found just as in the GDR.<sup>65</sup> In addition to that, the YSP pledged to carefully select cadre members "on the basis of the working class ideology."<sup>66</sup> Moscow and East Berlin actively supported this process through their intense involvement in the field of education: Throughout the schools' existence, East Germans taught at the "Abdallah Badheeb School for Scientific Socialism" as well as at Aden's police academy.<sup>67</sup>

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Aufbau des Sozialismus zu erreichen." Art. 2, Constitution of the PDRY of October 31 1978, pub. by the Foreign Ministry of the PDRY, 14 October Corporation Aden, 1981.

**61** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr.27368, 6f.

**62** | On the interconnection of state and Party after launching the constitution see: Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 42-55.

**63** | Schroeder, 1999, 421; Schroeder, 2013, 483-486.

**64** | Brehony, 2013, 108.

**65** | Ismail/Ismail, 1986, 52f.

**66** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr.27368, 7.

**67** | Cigar, 1985, 778.

Due to close cooperation of Soviet and East German advisors, but also due to the GDR's function as a role model, the newborn vanguard party explicitly continued and even intensified its close ties with the Eastern Bloc: Based on the "principle of Proletarian Internationalism,"<sup>68</sup> the YSP declared the "continuous strengthening of the alliances with the Socialist state community under Soviet leadership"<sup>69</sup> one of its priority goals and the East Germans readily worked towards this objective. The first party communiqué after the establishment of diplomatic relations between the SED and the UNFPO was followed by another agreement in June 1977, which preceded the "YSP Founding Congress" that further expanded cooperation.<sup>70</sup> This line was continued with a more comprehensive agreement in 1981.

"[The] cooperation agreement [of 1981]<sup>71</sup> between the SED and the YSP for the period of 1982 to 1987 now [in 1984] already has contributed significantly by imparting experiences."<sup>72</sup>

Before the "1986 crisis," the SED clearly planned for a long-term commitment in the PDRY that even exceeded involvement of the Soviet CPSU.<sup>73</sup>

### 3.2 Pushing Development: The Impact of the Founding of the YSP on Socialist State-Building

The GDR's efforts to promote the establishment of a socialist state in South Yemen corresponded well with the YSP's intentions. The party program of the YSP was even more explicit than the new constitution with regard to the Party's plans of the "development of Socialism" as a long-term goal. According to this document, society had to change as a whole to achieve socialism. The leadership of the vanguard party was to promote a "change of the relation of classes within society" to ensure "the dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>74</sup> Mass organizations led by the YSP were to contribute to the process by "organizing and educating

**68** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU Mfs HA II Nr.27368, 8.

**69** | Ibid. 4; 8.

**70** | 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.

**71** | Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU Mfs HA II Nr. 28712, 178.

**72** | Ibid., 176.

**73** | Interview with Fritz Balke on May 23 2011.

**74** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU Mfs HA II Nr.27368, 5.

the masses as well as developing their class consciousness and strengthen the connection between Party and people.”<sup>75</sup> This formulation unmistakably reminds one of Lenin’s approach to society: “Integration of society” in the new Yemen also meant “homogenization of society.” The language of the new party program now resembled less the predecessor’s mixture of vague revolutionary thoughts and Marxist phrases and more the East German ideological jargon of the time.

During the 1970s, the USSR supported East Berlin’s activities in the “civil sphere” not only with personnel but also with technical equipment. This was especially the case for communications and the media, realms in which East Berlin had been active since the late 1960s. The Soviet construction of a station for receiving satellite signals in South Yemen enabled Moscow and East Berlin to directly broadcast to Aden. This complemented the East German news agency ADN’s deal with Aden News Agency (ANA) in 1970 in which ANA had agreed to broadcast East German features. East Berlin clearly had expected that this policy would pay off and further increase influence on the national South Yemeni media. Another agreement on the cooperation of the journalist federations of both countries for the period between 1983 and 1987 was signed in September 1983.<sup>76</sup> East German influence without doubt showed itself more and more in political practice and legislation. The program of the YSP of 1978 is just one of many indicators here:

“The Party especially focuses on the development of mass media – press, radio and TV broadcasting – as it is considered an effective political and ideological weapon to fulfill the tasks of the national-democratic revolution and to education the working masses.”<sup>77</sup>

At the end of the decade, the once flourishing media landscape of British-occupied Aden also had to yield to the YSP’s drive for socialist one-party rule and its full control of the public.

The GDR’s promotion of ties between actors of the “society sphere” was continued, not only with regard to the media, but in all fields of engagement. Cultural, economic, industrial, and technical cooperation were all renewed or expanded.<sup>78</sup>

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**75** | Ibid., 5.

**76** | Vereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen den Journalistenverbänden der DDR und der VDR Jemen für die Jahre 1983 bis 1987, September 5 1983, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-3.

**77** | JSP – Avantgarde des jemenitischen Volkes. Auszüge aus dem Programm der JSP (I) und (II), in: horizont No.50/51 1978, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr.27368, 6.

**78** | Unterzeichnung eines Abkommens über kulturelle und wissenschaftlich-technische Zusammenarbeit, April 7 1981; Unterzeichnung eines Abkommens über wirtschaftliche, industrielle und technische Zusammenarbeit sowie über ein Abkommen auf dem Gebiet

The “Agreement on Health Cooperation” of 1982 even preceded the Soviet-South Yemeni equivalent of 1987. One of the major fields of engagement remained the education sector, in which East German influence even increased: an overwhelming majority of 217 of the 258 PDRY citizens residing in the GDR in 1979 were students.<sup>79</sup> Apart from the presence of education advisors at all levels of South Yemeni politics, the opportunities for Yemeni students to come to East Germany steadily increased during the 1980s, especially after the official “Agreement on Student Exchange” was signed in December 1983.<sup>80</sup> Stipends usually included flights and accommodation.<sup>81</sup> South Yemeni youth delegations regularly visited the GDR and were complemented by engagement in the mentioned policy fields. In January 1982, for example, an FDJ delegation visited Aden to celebrate the first Anniversary of the “Days of Friendship” between East German and South Yemeni youth, a visit which was returned by the South Yemeni youth organization Asheed in March 1983.<sup>82</sup>

Other indications of the intensification of engagement after the founding of the YSP are financial aid, investments, and trade: Despite East Germany’s own financial problems, the SED remained rather generous with its credit conditions. The third and fourth governmental credits loaned to the Aden regime in 1978 and 1980 were accompanied by a consumption credit for the period of 1979 to 1983.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore, the repayments of the first three governmental credits of 1969, 1974, and 1978 were “deferred at the PDRY’s request.”<sup>84</sup> However, trade relations intensified as well. East Germany benefited immediately from Aden’s decision to increase its trade volume with the Eastern Bloc at the expense of trade with the “imperialist states.” “GDR export to the PDRY rose from 4,8 million VM in 1974, to an estimate of 10,3 Million in 1980 and about 24 Million VM in 1983.”<sup>85</sup>

Finally, a brief look at the development of the major East German strategy in socialist state- and nation-building during this phase is necessary. The work of the advisor groups had been continued throughout the 1970s and in some fields

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des Gesundheitswesens, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-3f.

**79** | Sofortinformation AG Ausländer an HA II, February 26 1979, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 27850, 46.

**80** | Vereinbarung über ein Abkommen über den Studentenaustausch zwischen den beiden Staaten, December 7 1983, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-3.

**81** | Planvorschlag 1986 und Plankorrektur 1985, Ministerrat der DDR an MfS Leiter der Abteilung Finanzen, July 18 1985, in: BStU MfS Abt. Finanzen Nr.3492, 45.

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

**83** | Ibid., 177.

**84** | Ibid., 178.

**85** | Ibid., 178.

even expanded after the establishment of the YSP. One example of this is the legal apparatus. While the GDR had been highly active in consulting on constitutional law since 1969, East Berlin decided to become involved in the more concrete design of the PDRY's legal system later on. The PDRY's attorney general had visited the GDR in 1980 and asked for consultancy support from East Berlin. His request was granted two years later. Hans Bauer was delegated as an official Party-Secretary of the Department of the Attorney General in 1982.<sup>86</sup> According to Bauer, the PDRY had expressed their preference to follow the model of East Germany as the socialist "Musterländle," the model state: "The Yemenis were interested in the GDR because it was comparable. The Governorates were similar to our 'Bezirke,' the Districts to our Counties. Not all could be converted, but a lot was similar."<sup>87</sup> All in all, Bauer considers East German engagement in this sector alone of the most decisive external factors of significant impact on the juridical system of the PDRY.

### **3.3 A Beneficial Investment? Scope and Intensity of East-German Cooperation with the South Yemeni Military and Security Apparatus**

"Apparently there existed important cooperation in the field of security in South Yemen, though I didn't have any information about this in my area of responsibility in the Ministry."<sup>88</sup>

Heinz-Dieter Winter, GDR Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1986-1990

After the merger of all relevant political groups and parties and the Founding Congress of the YSP, the GDR's policy of socialist state- and nation-building transformed smoothly from "establishment" to "consolidation and continuity" with regard to all three dimensions of state- and nation-building. Just as in the 1970s, Moscow left the civil sectors and security apparatus as part of Socialist nation-building to East Germany. In Addition to that, East German engagement now was expanded to the military sphere to support the USSR policy.<sup>89</sup> During the "Phase of Continuity and Consolidation," engagement usually was either continued on the same level of intensity or even increased. This was especially the case for the support of the security apparatus and military cooperation, which was coordinated in great secrecy.

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**86** | Vermerk über die Einstellung der inoffiziellen Zusammenarbeit mit dem GMS "Leonhardt" Reg. Nr. XV 3481/1982, October 11 1988, in: BStU MfS AP Nr.36630-92.

**87** | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011. On the GDR's "model character" for the developing countries, also see: Howell, 1994, 328.

**88** | Interview with Heinz-Dieter Winter July 3 2012.

**89** | Möller, 2004, 54.

## Contributions to the PDRY's Military as Part of Moscow's Strategic Policy

The involvement of the NVA in the PDRY remained quite modest, though this was rather owed to the NVA's insignificant contribution of military equipment in the developing world in combination with Soviet dominance in the field. In 1972, Minister of Defense Heinz Hoffmann acquired the permission to train military personnel in the developing countries by the Warsaw Pact leadership,<sup>90</sup> but it was not before 1978 that the first military protocol was signed between the two countries.<sup>91</sup> Throughout its existence, the SED had been extremely secretive about its military cooperation with the states of the Third World: While the party organ "Neues Deutschland" regularly and freely reported about any protocol signed with states outside the Eastern Bloc, agreements on military or security issues regularly were left out.<sup>92</sup>

Thus, it was not until the end of the 1970s that the intensity of engagement became internationally public and thus relevant in international relations: the West German weekly magazine "Der Spiegel," for example, reported about East German support for revolutionary and potentially aggressive regimes of the Third World. In 1980, a feature warned of a looming revolution in North Yemen, the former "bastion of the West between Saudi Arabia and leftist South Yemen," exported from Aden.<sup>93</sup> Rumors about Soviet and East German engagement usually exceeded the actual presence and cooperation by far and thus increased insecurities for any neighboring state siding with the other player in the Cold War.

However, East German engagement in the military and security apparatus indeed was expanded in scope and intensity and could not be kept a secret any longer.<sup>94</sup> Despite the comparably late start of official military training in South Yemen, the PDRY ranks second only to Vietnam in numbers of officers trained by the GDR between 1973 and 1989.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, the GDR's Ministry of the Interior repeatedly granted "emergency" demands. But this was not restricted to provisioning South Yemeni troops or civilians:<sup>96</sup> The GDR's Ministry of the Interior quickly and non-bureaucratically processed the demand for 4,000 grenades for the recoilless gun B-10.<sup>97</sup> On the one hand this big share of a small contribution to

**90** | Engelhardt, 1993, in: Möller, 2004, 30.

**91** | Scharfenberg, 2012, 86.

**92** | See: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, Mostly based on publications of "Neues Deutschland," 1987.

**93** | Feuer der Revolution nicht zu löschen, in: Der Spiegel, No.10, 1980.

**94** | For example sixty South Yemeni officers at the Offiziershochschule Otto Winzer in the GDR were granted a course of three years, see: Abkommen zwischen der Regierung der DDR und der Regierung der VDRJ über die Ausbildung von Militärkadern der Streitkräfte der VDRJ in der DDR vom 11.6.1981, in: BArch, DVW 1/54328.

**95** | Möller, 2004, 54.

**96** | Vermerk über Hilfsleistungen, July 18 1978, in: BStU MfS AGM Nr.430, 1.

**97** | Letter to Dickel, July 12 1978, in: BStU MfS AGM Nr.430, 63.

the military in the developing partner countries may be interpreted as part of the GDR's interest in maintaining good relations with the PDRY. On the other hand, it has to be considered an indication of the integration of the GDR into Moscow's policy toward South Yemen.

### **Cooperation between Two Secret Services – The GDR's Major Field of Action in the PDRY**

Archival material on the Stasi's engagement in Aden during the 1980s is rich and plentiful, as divisions other than the HV A became involved during that period. Relations especially between the two security services undeniably were close and East Berlin went to great lengths to strengthen the South Yemeni version of itself. The Stasi supplied the PDRY's KfS with the equipment and training needed and tried to fulfill their partners' wishes as much as possible.<sup>98</sup> After the first agreement between the GDR's Stasi and the PDRY's KfS, signed in November 1970, a new agreement was signed in November 1980<sup>99</sup> that included and spelled out the provisions of the two protocols of November 1979 between the two organs in greater detail.<sup>100</sup> They affirmed the modus operandi and significantly intensified cooperation. New protocols were to be signed in November each year and secret information exchanged in quarterly intervals.<sup>101</sup> The agreement of 1980 included a five-year period for which it would remain in force unless new regulations deemed otherwise.<sup>102</sup> Similar to other policy fields, the GDR offered training for KfS cadres in the GDR, but also pledged material supplies. All in all, these added up to 8 million East German Marks, including arms worth 3.6 million and an additional 2.6 million to upgrade the surveillance network. An additional 1,800 firearms were sent as a "gift" to the KfS in May 1980.<sup>103</sup> These did not include any costs

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**98** | In the protocol of 1979, the KfS for example asked for another 5,000 machine guns and 500 pistols. Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, Article 15, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767.

**99** | "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 KfS der VDRJ, November 25 1980, in: BStU MfS Abt. X 1789, 1.

**100** | Protokoll zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ vom November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt X Nr.1763; Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767.

**101** | Vereinbarung über die Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ, November 25 1980, Article 13, in: BStU MfS Abt. X 1789.

**102** | Ibid.

**103** | Oberst Fiedler HV A III an MfS Abt.X Geberalmajor Damm, May 13 1980, in: BStU MfS Abt.X Nr.234 Teil 1 von 2, 392.

for personnel and training.<sup>104</sup> The Stasi even coordinated the construction of the KfS building and sent seven permanent Stasi advisors to the KfS who were to be positioned in the operational service of the KfS, the Defense Forces, the KfS cadre school, bodyguard services, and surveillance.<sup>105</sup>

Based on coded notes of Section BCD, the PDRY at times ranked the highest among all partners with regard to internal security support. File BCD No. 2802 includes an overview of the main material deliveries by the HV A to Third World countries in 1980. Equipment worth 6.85 million VM was delivered to the top three countries in terms of spending: “-030-” (South Yemen), “-020-” (Mozambique), and “-120-” (PLO). The share spent on South Yemen totals about 5 million.<sup>106</sup> Though 1980 had been the year of highest solidarity spending in the history of the HV A,<sup>107</sup> the share spent on the PDRY nonetheless is by far the greatest, which was also the case for most of the years of this period: During the three years between 1980-82, about 6.3 million of the total 15.8 million of equipment and arms deliveries by the HV A to the closest political allies was sent to Aden. Apart from arms, guns, and ammunition, the GDR supposedly delivered chemical warfare substances as well.<sup>108</sup> All in all, deliveries worth about 6 million GDR Marks were sent by the BCD alone within only two years. Taking everything into consideration, it may be assumed that actual spending of the MfS in South Yemen probably even exceeded the numbers provided in the available files.

### **The Stasi’s Most Ambitious Project in Aden: The Rise and Fall of “Network 3”**

However, East German support was not given without very concrete political and economic motives. While the biggest share of money spent on the KfS was for training and special forces equipment, the Stasi established a surveillance outpost by the Red Sea that fully depended on East German instruction and money as part of the Warsaw Pact surveillance network. Under the code name “Netzwerk 3,” or “Network 3,” the project was coordinated jointly by the Section HA III

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**104** | Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, Annex 1, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767.

**105** | Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767, Article 6.

**106** | Lieferungen 1980: Gesamt [handwritten], 1980, in: BStU MfS BCD Nr.20802, 73.

**107** | For example in 1981, only about 0.75 million of the full 5.2 million Valuta Marks were spent on the PDRY and in 1982 only about 0.5 million of a total 3.1 million Valuta Marks. Also see: Sendungen 1965-1982, in: BStU MfS BCD Nr.20802, 93.

**108** | Even though there is no detailed listing about the concrete amounts, a coding list for the different kinds and amounts of these substances can be found in file BCD 2854. Ziffern-Code, GVS MfS 031-944/76, 1976, BStU MfS BCD Nr.2854, 114-116.

and the H VA.<sup>109</sup> Gieseke describes the HA III as a “cross-section unit”<sup>110</sup> that analyzed radio traffic inside the GDR and also between the territory of the GDR and West Germany. In addition to that, HA III had been active abroad. The project “Network 3” clearly was part of Moscow’s wider surveillance strategy in the region rather than just an East German initiative.<sup>111</sup> The station at this geostrategically decisive position between Africa and Asia at the time was the only one outside East Germany’s vicinity<sup>112</sup> and the expansion of East German radar activities was ordered by the Soviet Ministry of State Security itself. The establishment of a military radio station in South Yemen was intended to “skim [the enemy’s] secret communication [by the HA III] which is only possible in this area.”<sup>113</sup> With regard to the exchange of information, very concise instructions can be found:

“Both sides exchange information on a regular basis on the following topics:  
[...] The politics of the U.S.A., France, Great Britain and the FRG and their allies  
[...] aiming to disturb cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Socialist states with [the countries of the Middle East and the Horn of Africa],” including the activities of their secret services.<sup>114</sup>

The two cooperation protocols of 1979 pledged a “half stationary radio station”<sup>115</sup> to Aden, worth more than 1 million East German Marks. With these protocols, East Germany handed over any “demand for certain information” to the fS and vice versa, while the KfS guaranteed to supply the GDR with information

**109** | Schmidt, 2010, 245.

**110** | “Querschnittseinheit,” Gieseke, in: Kaminski/Persak/Gieseke, 2009, 220.

**111** | Schmidt, 2010, 20f; Schreiben Horst Männchen Abt. III an den 1. Stellvertreter des Ministers, Generalleutnant Bruno Beater, Meldung zur Aktion “Netzwerk 3,” November 3 1978, in: BStU, MfS, HA III 680, 29.

**112** | Apart from the station in the PDRY, the GDR entertained three stations in the ČSSR, four in the FRG, two in Austria and one in Belgium. in: Schmidt, 2010, 21. Station “Windrose” in Ethiopia and “Netzwerk 4” in Mozambique followed in 1979 and 1980. Schmidt, 2010, 106; Schreiben Horst Männchen an Stellvertreter des Ministers, Bruno Beater: Konzeption zum Aufbau einer Funkabwehr in Äthiopien und Jemen (VDRJ), February 23 1978; BStU, MfS, HA III 11787, 312–314; Stellvertreter Operativ: Konzeption zur Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Aktion »Netzwerk 4« in der Abt. III in Zusammenarbeit mit der HVA, March 31 1980, in: BStU, MfS, HA III 11787, 371–389.

**113** | “Abschöpfung der Nachrichtenverbindungen [des Gegners durch die HA III des MfS, Anm. Autorin], die nur in diesem territorialen Raum möglich sind”; On the establishment of Netzwerk III: Neiber an Mielke, April 25 1984, in: HA III 11099, 121.

**114** | Protokoll über Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ für das Jahr 1983, in: BStU MfS Abt.X Nr. 1811, 2.

**115** | Protokoll zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ vom November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt X Nr.1763, Article 1.

relevant for “the specific interests of the MfS”<sup>116</sup> and mutual reports in quarterly periods.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, East Germany and South Yemen agreed to jointly “create the foundations to process [sic!] the agency of the Bundesnachrichtendienst [West German secret service] on the territories of the YAR and the PDRY.”<sup>118</sup> To train and support the KfS personnel responsible for the station, the MfS guaranteed to send not only a support delegation, but also a “long-term” expert in 1980. This permanent advisor, together with loyal IMs among the South Yemeni KfS, made sure that no relevant information was withheld from the Stasi.<sup>119</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION: EAST-GERMAN ENGAGEMENT SWINGS FROM ENTHUSIASM TO DISILLUSION

Apart from its unique geostrategic position, the PDRY proved to be also of political use for the USSR, as long as it moved within its given room of maneuver to accommodate Soviet foreign policy goals. When the former NLF finally merged with the remaining other political organizations in the country to form an actual “Yemeni vanguard party,” the Soviet Union as well as the GDR could hope for possible long-term cooperation in their interest. As the YSP vanguard was modelled on the CPSU, and even though the result widely differed from the efficiency of Soviet party discipline, the “Treaties of Friendship” with Moscow and its most important henchmen in the Soviet Bloc, the GDR,<sup>120</sup> left no doubt that Moscow intended to closely connect with the YSP: On Soviet accord, Erich Honecker had travelled to Aden to personally sign the “Treaty of Friendship.”<sup>121</sup> Internal documents also support this assumption: One of the most politically remarkable features of the protocols and agreements signed between the MfS and the KfS for example, is the inclusion of the PDRY in the sphere of the states of the Eastern Bloc, as opposed to the “imperialist forces,” simply presupposing a congruence of interests between

**116** | Ibid., Article 2 and 3.

**117** | Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767, Article 3.

**118** | Protokoll über Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ für das Jahr 1983, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1811, 3.

**119** | E.g. Brief an HA I Kommando Landstreitkräfte Unterabteilung Stab, November 28 1984, in: BStU MfS HA I 13551, 26; Protokoll über die vorgesehenen Maßnahmen der Zusammenarbeit zwischen dem MfS der DDR und dem KfS der VDRJ im Jahre 1980, November 17 1979, in: BStU MfS Abt. X Nr. 1767, Article 6.

**120** | Vertrag über Freundschaft und Zusammenarbeit zwischen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und der VDRJ, November 17 1979, in: Jemen (Demokratischer), Völkerrechtliche Vereinbarungen der DDR, 1987, 140-1.

**121** | Scharfenberg, 2012, 93.

South Yemen, the Soviet Union, and East Germany. Another strong indication is the presence of several Soviet long-term advisors to the president of the PDRY, especially during Ali Nasir Mohammed's tenure.<sup>122</sup>

Still, both historical and current commentary on Soviet involvement in the PDRY regularly emphasizes Moscow's modest economic and financial support in Aden: Economic assistance between 1967 and 1980 added up to only around \$152 million.<sup>123</sup> However, analysts tend to overlook the fact that Soviet aid grew continuously after the installation of Moscow's new naval base and the signing of the Treaty of Friendship in 1979<sup>124</sup> and of course do not take into consideration several secret loans granted to the PDRY. Nonetheless, the growth of support cannot camouflage its purpose. Throughout the 1970s, Soviet engagement focused first and foremost on military development tied to ideological training, mostly delivered by Cuban and East German experts. The long-term objective was the stabilization of the most loyal country and regime in the region.

Soviet engagement during the third phase of East German foreign policy in the PDRY was characterized by a continuously high level of intensity, while the two major fields of engagement, the military and ideology, were complemented by technical assistance. The GDR, however, upheld its engagement in various policy fields. This especially was the case in the crucial civil fields of law, economics, education, and the media, where the Yemeni side repeatedly asked for more assistance. In addition to that, the intensity of East German engagement, especially toward the security apparatus, continuously increased until the "1986 crisis." Investments by the Stasi in the establishment of the Marxist-Leninist regime in South Yemen reached an all-time high of 10.6 million East German Marks in 1978, almost two-thirds of the full East German spending on "young nation states" of internal security's "Planteil III,"<sup>125</sup> which included the Stasi's spending on the ten closest partners in cooperation with secret services. Furthermore, the GDR finally became involved in the training of military personnel. The former annual routine of high-ranking delegation exchanges noticeably changed its pace after 1979, with an average of six mutual visits at the state and party level every

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**122** | Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.

**123** | Halliday, 1990, 199.

**124** | Aid increased by about a third from 1976 to 1978 and tripled until 1983: Soviet gross aid disbursements by recipients (\$m.) 1976 – 1983; PDRY absolute numbers in \$ million 1976: 6,6; 1978: 8,8; 1983, 21.

**125** | The PDRY tops a list of ten countries: PDRY, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Bissau, Angola and Cape Verde, in: Zusammenstellung des MfS für Hilfeleistungen an junge Nationalstaaten 1978, December 15 1978, in: BStU MfS Abt. Finanzen Nr.1393, 149.

year.<sup>126</sup> The dominance of the party sphere in bilateral relations is undeniable, as the term “party and state delegation”<sup>127</sup> suggests. Also, after the founding of the YSP, each and every delegation visiting from both sides was accompanied by a high-ranking party member.<sup>128</sup> This routine was upheld until the “1986 crisis” and supported by the installation of a “Joint Yemeni-German Commission” that held its first meeting in May 1980 in Berlin and congregated annually to discuss political matters of mutual interest.<sup>129</sup>

But regardless of this increased engagement from both the USSR and the GDR, discontent with the actual results of their engagement was growing in the early 1980s. The hopes to find oil had not been fulfilled. Evaluation of its performance indicated that South Yemen’s secret service was still inefficient and not producing any valuable information. The same was the case for other state institutions. According to Hans Bauer, a trusted advisor to the attorney general of the PDRY from 1982 to 1985, not all ministries were working efficiently.<sup>130</sup> Despite the establishment of the YSP as the central power organ, the decisive step towards the realization of “democratic centralism,” socialist state- and nation-building was still far from being realized. As a consequence, East Germany seemed to concentrate more on ensuring a beneficial outcome for itself at the end of Phase III than it had during the intense years of state- and nation-building of the 1970s. While ideology and “anti-imperialist” solidarity had been the major focus of East Germany during that decade of optimism, its interest appeared to have shifted more toward military engagement now. And in case Moscow and East Berlin had hoped for a fully controllable socialist homunculus by the Red Sea, these hopes were not fulfilled, either. Aden over time appeared to develop a mind of its own about the character and degree of external involvement in South Yemen. At the end of Phase III, the external powers’ policy goal of a stable, loyal socialist ally more and more receded into the distance until the events of 1986 finally challenged the regime’s survival and thus the future of Eastern Bloc involvement in the country.

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**126** | Six mutual delegation visits at the state and party level/sphere in 1980, five in 1981 and another six in 1982. *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP* [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 167-174.

**127** | *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP* [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 168.

**128** | Interview with Wolfgang Bator May 27 2011.

**129** | *Informationsmappe für den Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der JSP* [...] Ali Nasser Mohammed, November 1984, in: BStU MfS HA II Nr. 28712, 169.

**130** | Operative Einschätzung des GMS “Leonhardt” – Vorg.-Nr.XV 3481/82, August 28 1986, HV A/III/AG/018, in: BStU MfS AGMS Nr. 10208-88, 67; Interview with Hans Bauer June 20 2011.