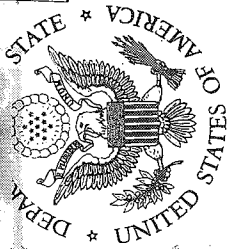


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INTELLIGENCE NOTE

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YAR/PDRY: INTENSITY OF BORDER FIGHTING INCREASES

Despite the announcement of two ceasefires in less than a week, fighting along the borders of the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) has intensified. Fighting is occurring along some 75 miles of the border. Immediate YAR/NUF objectives appear to be the occupation of the highlands of the Second and Third Governorates. Regular forces of the YAR and PDRY insurgent forces based in the YAR and operating under the umbrella organization, the National Unity Front (NUF), have reportedly taken Mukayris, capital of the pre-independence 'Awdhali state. The capture of this strategic provincial capital (see map), which lies only a few miles from the YAR border, gives the YAR/NUF forces control of the 7000-foot high escarpment overlooking the lowlands of the Third Governorate.

The Military Outlook. According to clandestine sources, the YAR/NUF forces believe the capture of the remaining fortified towns in the Third Governorate and the strategic town of Dali' in the Second Governorate is imminent. If the YAR/NUF forces are successful in occupying the plateau which runs across the northern half of these two governorates, it will be difficult for the PDRY ground forces operating from the coastal strip to mount effective counterattacks.

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Barring political defections from the PDRY military forces, which are generally better equipped and trained than those of the YAR and the NUF, it appears that the superior PDRY ground and air forces could prevent YAR/NUF entry into the coastal strip, or at least make it very costly. It seems unlikely that the invaders could exploit their control of the 'Awdhali area to go all the way to the sea at Shuqra' and bisect PDRY. It also appears that Aden, the national capital, remains secure.

The short-term prospect, therefore, would appear to be YAR/NUF occupation of the PDRY highlands. Whether PDRY can eventually oust the intruders probably depends on the political resilience of the two rival camps, and the levels of outside aid.

The Arab Lineup. Saudi Arabia sees the PDRY as its archenemy. The Saudis have long encouraged and supported the NUF's desultory anti-PDRY campaign. Over the past several months, as YAR/PDRY tensions and incidents have escalated, the Saudis have increased this support. The YAR also has received military assistance from Libya, whose leaders object to the PDRY's espousals of Marxist ideology and its reliance on Soviet arms and military advice. There are some fairly substantial indications that Egypt has also supplied arms to the YAR but put Libyan cover on these shipments in order to avoid identification with the enemies of a Soviet-supported "progressive" regime. Iraq and occasionally Syria have provided financial and technical assistance to the PDRY, but all other Arabs appear to favor the YAR side of the agreement.

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Settlement Efforts. The prospects for early settlement are dim.

The October 14 agreement on a ceasefire and withdrawal of troops was honored only on paper. A second ceasefire, negotiated on the evening of October 18/19, is unlikely to have any more validity than the first. The PDRY seems to have a genuine interest in delaying attack by the numerically superior invading forces, but the YAR, while paying lip service to Arab League and other mediation efforts, continues military operations. Wide-ranging YAR/PDRY talks are scheduled to take place in Cairo on October 21 under Arab League auspices but, judging from the range of contentious issues placed on the agenda by both sides, will produce no early result.

War Aims. The immediate military objective of the current YAR/NUF incursion may be to establish a safehaven on PDRY territory for dissident military and political operations. Both the YAR and Saudi Arabia would like to create conditions suggesting that the conflict is a civil war rather than a foreign invasion. However, both Saudi Arabia and Libya are highly antipathetic to the Marxist orientation of the Aden government and would be much more comfortable with traditionalist leadership of the type offered by the YAR. Therefore, the probable minimum political objective of the YAR and its supporters is a change in the PDRY regime. With considerable justice, both cultural and geopolitical, San'a' regards the PDRY as an artificial state which should be part of the YAR. In fact, Yemeni

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unity is the ultimate objective of both Yemeni regimes, although it may be some time before either tribal North Yemen or detribalized South Yemen can absorb the other.

INR/Near East and South Asia
Director : Curtis F. Jones
Analyst : Roger B. Merrick
Ext. : 22027
Released by: D. E. Mark *DEM*