In January 1965, the Labour government of Harold Wilson was in office for just over two months. In terms of foreign and colonial affairs, three major trouble spots stood out: Southern Rhodesia, confrontation with Indonesia over Malaysia and the increasing violence in the Federation of South Arabia. That same month the Local Intelligence Committee (LIC) in Aden produced a report, based on interrogations of suspects, that argued that the most significant insurgent group in the Federation of South Arabia, the National Liberation Front (NLF) was almost entirely a creature of the Egyptian Intelligence Service (EIS).

The intelligence report provided a detailed description of the origins, aims and methods of the NLF. The origins of the NLF were somewhat obscure emerging in fits and starts in early to mid 1963 under the leadership of Qahtan Muhammad al-Shaabi (1920-1981), who had left the Federation for Cairo in 1958. The Egyptians appeared to have little time for the organization until December 1963, when Nasser decided to pursue a much more aggressive policy against the Federation of South Arabia. From that point on, the NLF became increasingly referenced on Cairo and Sana’ radio propaganda broadcasts and the flow of arms and trained operatives from the Yemen Arab Republic into the Federation of South Arabia exponentially increased. The
Egyptians appear to have primarily used the NLF as a flag of convenience for what were dissident tribesman of no great political conviction, notably in the Radfan from April 1964. The Egyptians provided the means for increasingly sophisticated operations with explosives, mines and rocket launchers as the dissident campaign spread through most parts of the south. At all stages, according to the LIC report, the Egyptian military and intelligence operatives were deeply involved in the training and support of the movement. A campaign in Aden opened in August 1964 reaching its peak with seven attacks during the visit of the new Labour government’s Secretary of the Colonies, Anthony Greenwood in November 1964. It was noted that the ‘ruthlessness and expertise employed in certain of these and previous acts pointed to well trained thugs operating under skilled local direction; and they proved that the N.L.F. is now prepared and able to carry out determined terrorism of the classic kind.’ The leadership of the NLF was dismissed as being a front. It was considered that the: ‘Front is entirely under Egyptian domination and that operations are usually instigated in Cairo, and are planned by and executed under the direction of Egyptian Intelligence Officers in the Yemen.’ Furthermore, the Egyptians were training large numbers of dissidents in Yemen and in Egypt. The picture revealed was that Egypt was directing a major effort aimed at driving the British out of Aden.¹ This report based on, what seemed very reliable intelligence, fed into an important March 1965 Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) report, which more or less endorsed the LIC view on the Nasserite threat.² Prior to this the JIC had been more skeptical.³ Virtually every intelligence report that came out of the Aden from that point on constantly referenced the controlling influence of the Egyptians on the dissident campaign and importantly, the implication that the attacks could be
turned on and off by the Egyptians. How had this Egyptian inspired campaign against the Federation of South Arabia and the most potent symbol of residual British power in the Middle East: the Aden base, come about?

II

By 1965, British governments of various hues had dealt with Nasser as a major figure in Egyptian and Middle Eastern affairs for the more than a decade. To say the least, the relationship was, for the most part, extremely strained. Nasser’s agenda of pan-Arabism, far more than Soviet communism, was the single greatest threat to British power and influence in the Middle East in this period; at least in the mind of most British policy makers. The Middle East was a key region in Britain’s economic and foreign policies from 1945 until 1968, perhaps second only to NATO. (Some such as Denis Healey saw it as even more important). Oil on cheap terms and crucially payable in sterling not dollars, primarily from Kuwait, (over fifty percent of the UK’s imports in some years), was one of the props that underpinned the fragile British economy in the first twenty-five years of the postwar era. Middle Eastern oil was a matter of ‘overwhelming importance’ to the UK, a British official emphasized to the Americans in 1963. The defence of Kuwait was arguably the key factor that underlay the maintenance of a chain of British military bases across the Mediterranean into
the Middle East. The base at Aden grew in importance after the Iraqi irredentist intentions towards Kuwait became clear after its protectorate status ended in 1961.

There were five distinct phases in the relationship between British governments and Nasser’s Egypt between 1952 and 1968. The first phase (1952-54) covered the negotiations leading to the mothballing of the British base at Suez. The second (1954-56) saw British leaders, notably Prime Minister Anthony Eden (and his senior Minister, Harold Macmillan) come to the view that Nasser’s espousal of what they considered a radical brand of Arab nationalism was a clear and present danger to British interests in the Arab world. Less convincingly, these veterans of the 1930s used exaggerated analogous rhetoric that suggested that the battle with Nasser was a Manichean struggle – much like the struggles against the European dictators. The first was a not unreasonable assumption but the second, an exaggeration of Nasser’s potential, would lead to the reckless decision making of the Suez crisis. After the Suez failure a third phase saw Harold Macmillan, aided by a growing American disenchantment with Nasser, attempting to forge a coalition to oppose what was considered the Egyptian leader’s expansionist aims in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. This anti-Nasser policy became unsustainable with the Iraqi revolution of July 1958. A fourth phase between July 1958 and September 1962 saw an Anglo-Egyptian rapprochement as Nasser and the west’s interests aligned over opposition to the growing communist influence in post-revolutionary Iraq. This period saw the settlement of financial issues arising from Suez and cooperation over the withdrawal of British forces from Jordan (1958) and over the Iraqi threat to Kuwait (1961). In an important meeting of British diplomats in Middle Eastern countries in 1959, the
Foreign Office, Deputy Under-secretary, Sir Roger Stevens, summed up the new look to British strategy in the region, which was the pursuit of a policy of non-interference and non-involvement in Arab quarrels. However, he emphasized ‘it had never been contested that we should hold our position in Aden, the Aden Protectorate and the Persian Gulf. In any conflict between those positions and anything else it was paramount that we should hold on.’ Therefore, while Britain withdrew from a more generalized involvement in anti-Nasser activities, Britain still remained committed to a presence in the Middle East. The determination to defend this presence explains the final phase (1962-67) that saw the return of adversarial relations centered on the Yemen Civil War and the growing insurgency in the British ruled Federation of South Arabia. Nasser once more appeared to be threatening those key positions in Aden and the Persian Gulf. It is this last phase that will be the focus of this paper.

III

The early years of the 1960s saw Nasser suffer a severe reversal of fortune with the collapse of the union with Syria in September 1961. The undisguised glee of his opponents- the conservative monarchies in Jordan and Saudi Arabia- and the isolation that Egypt suffered in the aftermath reinvigorated Nasser’s taste for foreign adventurism and it was little surprise when he took the opportunity to regain the initiative in the Arab world when pro-Nasser elements in the Yemen armed forces overthrew the Imam Badr in September 1962. Nasser was determined the Yemeni
revolution should succeed. It had the potential to end his isolation, confront his Saudi enemies and threaten the British position at Aden.\textsuperscript{14}

For the British government, the revolution and the subsequent deployment of Egyptian troops to preserve it came at exactly the wrong moment for it brought Nasser-influenced republicans to the borders of their Federation of South Arabia just as they were ramming through the merger of their Aden Crown Colony with the Federation. As the British found themselves being forced out of one base after another in the Near East in the 1950s, Aden had by 1962 became one of the lynchpins of Britain’s global defence strategy – both a vital link in the chain to her defence responsibilities in the Far East and perhaps more importantly to provide the base area for rapid intervention in the Persian Gulf. The British designated Aden a fortress colony where British control and influence would continue long into the future.\textsuperscript{15} The unwieldy constitutional edifice of the Federation of South Arabia was geared to protecting this vital strategic investment. The Colonial Office evidently hoped this would see the conservative Sultans outweigh the Adenis who were more cosmopolitan and more open to pan-Arabism. On the 26 September 1962 the British forced a merger of the crown colony with the Federation through a very reluctant Aden legislature.\textsuperscript{16} A day later, news of the Yemen revolution came through which almost certainly would have scuppered the vote in favour of merger. It was recognised by the British that a progressive regime in Yemen was likely to prove an attractive magnet to the increasingly Arab nationalist orientated political opinion in the cosmopolitan port of Aden, influenced by Cairo radio. The Governor of Aden, noting the disquiet amongst Aden opinion at their forced merger with the
Federation, feared that if a progressive regime came to power in the Imamate the British position and base would be untenable.  

Nasser had long been seen as an enemy of British plans for Aden and the Federation. Early Egyptian involvement in Aden after the 1952 revolution was based around two elements. One element was the propaganda of Cairo radio, which was turned on and off depending on the state of Anglo-Egyptian relations. The other was support that ebbed and flowed from Egypt for the Imam of the Yemen. The Imam was long a thorn in the side of the British, causing frequent trouble along the rather undefined border with South Arabia. As early as 1953, the British intelligence apparatus in Aden expressed concern about the potency of Egyptian propaganda in the colony. It was noted that: ‘People have begun to assemble in coffee shops to hear the Cairo news broadcasts and to participate in the discussions which invariably follow, especially on matters relating to Arab nationalist activities.’ Certainly, British intelligence reports on Aden were obsessed with the power of Cairo Radio. After the 1954 Anglo Egyptian agreement, anti-British propaganda was notably toned down. Cairo Radio was never shy about claiming success – in one report, it claimed that its broadcasts in 1954 had caused British proposals for Federation to fail. The toning down of the rhetoric of Cairo radio meant Egyptian propaganda received little attention until the after the signing of the 1956 Tripartite Pact of Jedda between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Yemen. Then, it was considered that the Cairo radio ‘after a fairly quite period is likely to increase its attacks on Aden again. These attacks should not be underestimated and everything possible should be done to counter them by every means at our disposal, including if possible radio propaganda.’ An August 1956
paper assessing the tripartite (Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Yemen) threat to the protectorate concluded that the military threat was minimal but all three Arab states were seeking the expulsion of British influence from the Arabian Peninsula. The news of the nationalization of the Suez Canal company brought large crowds out to listen to the Egyptian version of the news. In 1958, one of the Sultans who ‘enjoyed’ British protection was toppled after he was found to be in treasonable communication with Cairo. Egyptian propaganda appears, again according to intelligence reports, to have stimulated protests and violence in Aden in 1958 against the restricted franchise elections for the colony, which led to a state of emergency in May 1958. The British deported large numbers of Yemenis from Aden. The elections, which were a failure in terms of gaining popular assent, were only persisted with, as otherwise it would have been a gift for Cairo Radio.

In the protectorates, it was the Imam and his government that fermented dissent through the issuing of weaponry to dissident tribes. It was reported that Yemeni authorities had between August 1956 and January 1958 had issued 2,228 rifles to dissident tribes in the Dhala and Radfan. The sources of these rifles appear to have been Egypt and the Soviet Union. The Chief intelligence officer comment on 29 June 1959 in relation to subversive attacks: ‘So far as radio propaganda is concerned, Cairo took particular advantage in May of the situation in the upper Aulaqi Shaikdom, 10 broadcasts being devoted to exaggerated reports and vitriolic attacks on the security forces. There were also 3 clever broadcasts, aimed to subvert these forces and undermine their loyalty.’ Again Cairo Radio’s propaganda arm lowered
its activities with the improvement in Anglo-Egyptian relations between 1959 and 1962.

IV

The failure to kill the Imam Badr meant that he was able to rally support in the interior of the Yemen. A brutal civil war that would kill tens of thousands would consume Yemen for much of the 1960s. Within days of the revolution, Egyptian troops were deployed reaching 8,000 men as early as November 1962. The British were initially cautious about the revolution. Overt aid to the royalists was ruled out by Lord Home, the Foreign Secretary though for instance he was happy enough to let the Imam’s uncle and UN representative, Prince Hassan be conveyed through the Federation. Opinion in the Foreign Office was wary of this enterprise but Harold Macmillan supported it. The questions of aid to the burgeoning royalist cause and whether to recognise the Yemen Arab Republic was to lead to a bitter turf war in Whitehall between the Foreign Office (who favoured recognition and non-intervention) and the Ministry of Defence, the Colonial Office, and the men on the spot in Aden, (who all rejected recognition and increasingly came to favour intervention in support of the royalist cause). Harold Macmillan, deeply concerned as early as October 1962 about the Egyptian deployments (he spoke, with the characteristic hyperbole, he often employed, when it came to Nasser, of ‘losing’ Aden and Gulf), would eventually come down on the side of the non-recognition
A further background influence on the British government was the activities of Conservative backbench MPs most notably Colonel Neil ‘Billy’ McLean, who used their contacts with, particularly the Saudis, to lobby against recognition and to help organise British and European mercenary aid to the royalists. McLean, with the support of junior Ministers such as the fanatically anti-Nasser, Julian Amery, but also senior figures such as Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys, were able to drive British policy towards the Yemen Arab Republic. They formed the core of what is often referred to as the Aden Group. A few important points are worth noting. Firstly, there was considerable internal and external pressure to recognise the Yemen Arab Republic. Notably, the professionals in the Foreign Office, including the British Ambassador in Yemen, Christopher Gandy and the Ambassador in Cairo, Harold Beeley, consistently warned that failure to recognise would lead to the revival of the Anglo-Egyptian antagonism. The Foreign Office was not under any illusion about the potential danger from Nasser but was also against taking up a position that was likely to accelerate the danger. Secondly, the United States’ State Department warned that a British policy of non-recognition and of overt or covert support for the royalists would have the ultimate result of ‘weakening of the very position in the area the British seek to preserve by their support of Hassan.’ The point man for the Middle East in President Kennedy’s National Security Team, Robert Komer, concern was that the Yemen conflict would be deleterious to US interests which remained committed to protecting the Saudi Arabians but also maintaining increasingly friendly relations with President Nasser. Disengagement - mutual withdrawals of Egyptian forces in exchange for the cessation of Saudi/ Jordanian and UK aid for the royalists- became the established policy of the United States. The Foreign Office
was employed on a rearguard action to delay US recognition, which came to nothing when Kennedy informed Macmillan of the US decision to recognise in return for Nasser signing up to disengagement and making various pledges regarding good behaviour vis-à-vis the Saudis and the British in Aden.  

The British government, nonetheless, eventually settled on a different policy. Two fateful decisions were taken between September 1962 and February 1963. The first was the decision not to recognise the Yemen Arab Republic despite warnings from both Cairo and Washington. The second was to offer covert support for the royalist cause in Yemen. Both decisions arguably would shatter Anglo-Egyptian relations and lead to a renewed bitter confrontation with Nasser that would end British hopes of holding on to the Aden base. The Colonial Office almost from the start of the Yemen Civil War began taking overt and covert steps against the Yemen. Oil supplies that were normally sourced from Aden were to be embargoed. Governor Johnston in Aden was authorised by Sandys to give Prince Hassan £50,000 and up to 5,000 rifles. Johnston, an implacable opponent of recognition forcefully argued that the United Kingdom should not recognise until Prince Hassan had a chance to establish himself and his views stayed the hand of the Foreign Office from any early recognition. Nonetheless, in view of the American pressure, recognition would now most likely have taken place if not for the intervention of the Conservative MP, Lieutenant Colonel Neil McLean. Maclean had an enviable contact book among the conservative monarchies of the Middle East. In the autumn of 1962, he met with King Saud of Saudi Arabia and visited royalist held areas of the Yemen. Maclean claimed the royalists contrary to many assessments were still holding much of the
country. He also brought the news that the Saudis were willing to restore diplomatic relations with Britain broken since Suez. It was a decisive intervention that swung opinion in much of Whitehall against recognition as the Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys and Governor Johnston now built a strong case to block recognition. 40 By December, when the Americans recognised the Sallal regime, the British government had evidently decided to postpone recognition on the grounds that such a policy would help Nasser and would make it difficult to attempt overthrow the YAR. 41 The decision was hardened when cautious British approaches to get the Yemeni government to recognise the notoriously unstable frontiers foundered with Yemeni air attacks and incursions into the protected emirate of Beihan, whose ruler was providing extensive aid to the royalist cause. A cabinet memorandum outlining the pros and cons of the recognition issue was discussed on 10 January 1963. The anti-part of the paper called for non-recognition and rejected the American policy of building up Nasser. The Cabinet again rejected recognition. 42 Christopher Gandy made one last effort which persuaded Home but it was now too late. 43 The Colonial Office had seized control of the policy – indeed Johnston wanted to make the Yemen too hot to handle. 44 By February 1963, non-recognition of the Yemen Arab Republic had become hard and fast British policy.

V

During this period, the Egyptians were extremely emollient to the British, attempting to assuage their fears. Dr Fawzi, the Egyptian foreign minister, reassured the Foreign Secretary, Lord Home, whose views on the issue ebbed and flowed with every positive and negative report, when he claimed that the UAR would prevent the
Yemenis doing anything detrimental to the British position. The Egyptians, who until now, had shown uncustomary restraint on the question now began to apply pressure. Mohammed Heikal, the editor of *Al-Ahram* and Nasser’s main back channel purveyor of messages warned Harold Beeley, the British Ambassador in Cairo, that Nasser was convinced that the British were arming the rebels. He made clear that in retaliation ‘nothing would be easier than to undertake sabotage in the Aden.’ The carrot in this conversation was that Heikal claimed that ‘the last thing Nasser wanted to see was our departure from the Gulf. This would only result in chaos, of which the UAR would be an impotent spectator’. Beeley evidently feared that the restoration of relations with Saudi Arabia and the non-recognition of the Yemen would be a demonstration of hostility to the UAR and a sign that that Britain had taken sides in the Arab Cold War. It was also clear that the Americans had no appetite for confronting Nasser. Macmillan had concluded that non-recognition was the best solution in the short term but that it might bring trouble in the long run. On this second point he was surely correct. Not long afterwards, he scrawled on a despatch from Harold Beeley, arguing that Nasser would not mount a major offensive against the British position in the Arab world unless his interests demanded it, the line, ‘For Nasser put Hitler and it all rings familiar’. Whitehall engaged in a debate about the threat posed by Nasser that was to run for the next few years as Anglo-Egyptian relations deteriorated. Was Nasser a major threat, particularly in the light of likely increased British demand for Middle Eastern oil as William Luce, the British resident in the Gulf argued? Or would the alternatives be even worse, as the Deputy undersecretary of the Foreign Office, Sir Roger Stevens believed? A circular telegram was soon after issued asking diplomatic posts to
make clear that the British were not contracting out of the affairs of the Middle East. Lord Home was now dismissive of attempts by the Foreign Office to make positive approaches to Nasser. That being said, Anglo-Egyptian relations did not collapse immediately. For instance, the British government made clear to the Americans that they had no intention of sending aid to King Hussein when pro-Nasser agitation shook Jordan in April 1963. The British also kept calm about the renewed moves to Arab unity (the Federation of Arab States) that rose and fell almost in the blink of an eye after spring coups in Syria and Iraq. Harold Beeley in Cairo was quick to predict its unworkability. Over the summer tensions continued to rise: the disengagement agreements between the Saudis and Egyptians floundered; there were allegations of chemical warfare leveled against the Egyptians and a British military party was captured after accidently straying over the frontier.

VI

More covertly, government house in Aden was providing support for a British mercenary organization in the Yemen civil war that was being organized in London by Neil Mclean and operating with the support and knowledge of government ministers, namely Duncan Sandys. There was also support from the Saudi Arabian Government, who were to provide finance for the mercenaries, with a group of French mercenaries who were prepared to serve in the Yemen, and with the Royalist lenders themselves. By the end of 1963 the first mercenaries had arrived in the Yemen though planning for the operation began earlier than that. What is clear from the recent accounts of Clive Jones and Duff Hart-Davis is that between 1962 and 1968, a clique of Conservative MPs and ex-army officers, with the acquiescence of the governments of Harold Macmillan and Sir Alec Douglas-Home, organised
mercenaries to aid the Royalist side in the Yemen Civil War against the Republican regime supported by an Egyptian military force deployed by President Gamal Abdul Nasser.\textsuperscript{56} The High Commissioner in Aden, Sir Kennedy Trevakis was even more hawkish than his predecessor Sir Charles Johnston, which explains his support for the mercenary operation. He argued for an anti-Nasser policy on the grounds that that the Aden base is the major obstacle to Nasserite pretensions in the Arabian peninsula (and the Persian Gulf) and, on that account alone, its elimination would be an Egyptian target of the highest priority. Once they had succeeded in their mission in the Yemen, every Nasserite from Aden to Cairo would expect the Egyptians to turn their attention to the seat of imperialism in Aden. Not to do so would be to lose face and to accept the disagreeable political consequences of doing so.\textsuperscript{57}

The British, who were also supplying arms through Beihan, or allowing the Saudis to circumvent the disengagement agreement by doing so, were certainly as the new Prime Minister’s (Sir Alec Douglas Home) private secretary noted keeping ‘the situation in Yemen on the boil.’\textsuperscript{58}

Moreover, there was liaison with British officials in Aden and members of the SAS were allowed to take part in operations, while on leave. Sir Geoffrey Harrison, Deputy Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office told the Americans in January 1964 that:

Careful investigation had revealed that among the mercenaries were five Britons... In addition, several “Colonels” including Colonel Smiley... were with
the Imam’s forces from time to time. The British problem was compounded by the fact that the operation was operated by a British MP [Neil McLean] who had opened a recruiting office for mercenaries in Paris…. It was further complicated by the fact that a large number of backbench Tories were militantly and openly advocating measures of assistance for the Imam. 59

The Foreign Office emphasized that they were embarrassed at this development and sought to keep this activity to its present small dimensions. The State Department remarked that ‘this was somewhat like pregnancy. It was the fact of rather than the degree that made it significant’. 60 Despite these American appeals, the mercenary operation was given logistic support from the Yemen throughout 1963 and 1964. 61 During 1965 the number of mercenaries in the Yemen fluctuated. In January, there was only one British officer in the field but by August the number of British mercenaries had risen to twelve, including four wireless operators. Early in 1965, McLean opted out of control of mercenary operations and later in the year, Colonel David Smiley, also ex-SOE and former commander of the Sultan of Muscat’s armed forces, was appointed field commander of the mercenary force as a whole, while simultaneously acting as a correspondent for the Daily Telegraph. Lt.-Col. Jim Johnson, formerly a Territorial SAS commander and now a private businessman, was treasurer for and principal organizer of the British mercenaries from late 1963 to spring 1967. At no time had British mercenaries numbered more than a handful. At all times they were less than the French, whose maximum was probably no more than thirty to forty men. A 1968 JIC report declaimed all official British involvement.
However, its summation of the achievements of the mercenaries verged on the eulogistic:

The contribution made by mercenaries to the Royalist military effort in the Yemen Civil war was out of all proportion to their small numbers. They helped to sustain the morale of the Royalist princes in the field and encouraged them to keep up the struggle against the Egyptians and Republicans. We would not go no far as to say that the latter, had there been no mercenaries, would have been able to extend their control over the whole of the Yemen; tribal factors would probably have made this as impossible for them as for almost all previous rulers of the Yemen. But had it not been for the mercenaries, who trained the Royalist tribes, organised their supplies and ran their communications, the Royalists would not have been able to inflict so much damage and so many casualties on the highly-mechanised and air-supported Egyptian army and their Republican allies. Indeed, the military setbacks which the Egyptians suffered, and which were partly the result of the important support given to the Royalists by the mercenaries, were one of the main reasons why in the late summers of 1963, 1964 and 1965 they showed readiness to make concessions to the Saudis in order to achieve some kind of settlement.\(^6\)

It is clear, however, that the mercenaries during the early phase between 1963 and 1964 enjoyed at a minimum acquiescence and more likely considerable help from the British government. It is clear that the Head of the Secret Intelligence Service, Sir Dick White, provided some support for the operation.\(^6\) After the Labour government came to power in October 1964, this support ended. In a meeting with
Mohammad Heikal, one of President Nasser’s closest advisors in July 1965, Wilson was informed that Egyptian backed violence in the British protected Federation of South Arabia was due to the previous government’s granting of leave to certain officers and mercenaries to help the Royalist cause in Yemen. Wilson replied that ‘nothing of the sort was being done under the present administration. There was not British involvement from Beihan [one of the states of the FSA] now’. Wilson continued to be concerned about the allegations requesting a report on matter. The heavily redacted report denies the allegation. Nonetheless, private British involvement with the mercenaries continued until at least 1967.

There was an enlightening postscript to the Yemen mercenary Affair in 1970, when the Sunday Times plan to publish a series of articles on mercenary activity set off a flurry of activity in Whitehall. The first, and the only one to published, was of the high profile, David Stirling and his Watchguard security firm, which provided bodyguard services to foreign heads of state. This was subsequently to be followed up by a series of articles based on the account and correspondence of the last leader of the mercenaries, Major Gooley. It planned to describe the activities of the mercenaries and their links to important members and ex-members of the British military. It focused initially on the role of David Stirling and his security firm, Watchguard. Stirling had some links with the Yemen operation. (Some of the mercenary story had been previously revealed by the Sunday Times in 1964 after they viewed correspondence linking British military officials to mercenary activity that had fallen into the hands of the Egyptians.) The FCO emphasized that: ‘Watchguard and the mercenaries were and are nothing to do with Her Majesty’s
Government and we are not concerned what may be said about them by the *Sunday Times.*' However, there was reason to fear that the articles would detail: Israeli aid to the to the Yemeni royalists through the British mercenaries and the role of the SAS Regiment in the affair.

The Arab world being what it is, it would be very damaging to us if any article appeared which included points like these or alleged that we had given military support to the mercenaries or royalists. Although we at no time co-operated with other Governments, particularly the Israelis or the French, in these operations and could certainly deny such allegations, we know only too well that they would be likely to be believed.68

Harold Wilson’s interest was piqued and he asked to be kept informed about developments.69 Over the next few weeks, the government lent on the editor of the *Sunday Times*, Denis Hamilton, with representations from Admiral Norman Denning, Head of the ‘D’ notice committee, Sir Denis Greenhill, permanent under-secretary of state at the FCO and Edward Peck, deputy under-secretary for Defence/Intelligence (and Chair of the JIC) at the FCO, urging the paper to leave out important details, and not to allege official British involvement. Godfrey Hodgson, the head of the *Sunday Times* Insight Team, told Peck that a considerable dossier existed demonstrating ‘low level, probably unauthorized involvement by some British officers from time to time’. Peck did not deny this. However, Hodgson accepted Peck’s assurances that HMG had not been involved apart from monitoring what was going on and he gave a ‘categorical assurance that his articles would make it clear that HMG was not
involved.’ Harold Wilson annotated: ‘I don’t quite understand the reference to SAS followed by the statement that HMG are not involved. It was also decided to contact some of the important members of the Conservative Party, in office between 1962 and 1964, including the Commonwealth Secretary, Duncan Sandys, who presumably authorized the activities in support of the mercenaries orchestrated by the High Commissioner for Aden, Kennedy Trevaskis and his aide-de-camp Flight Lieutenant Anthony Boyle. At the same time, David Stirling, after initially contemplating an injunction, got a sympathetic journalist, Ian Colvin of the Daily Telegraph to write a series of spoiler articles based on the recollections of Colonel Jim Johnston, ex-Territorial SAS, which minimized Government involvement and provided a positive spin on the operation with articles headed; ‘Second ‘Lawrence’ foiled Nasser’s Army in Yemen’. Colvin was subsequently spoken to by Admiral Denning and agreed to pay attention to the D notice. Colvin agreed not to name names but said that a second article ‘may contain a vague assertion or speculation that the British and French intelligence services knew what was going on in the Yemen but there will be nothing specific and we will still be able to say if questioned that HMG were not involved in the Yemeni Civil War in any way.

As the Ministry of Defence (MOD), however, revealed, British involvement was clear-cut. In June 1963, the Commanding Officer of 22 SAS, aware of the plans to mount operations in the Yemen, asked four serving members of the regiment were they interested in volunteering. (Presumably one of these SAS men was Sir Peter de la Billière). Upon their agreement, a leave of absence facilitated their participation. According to the MOD: ‘The decision to ask, and then to send, the SAS personnel was
the commanding officer’s alone; no higher authority was sought; it had no official
backing, nor was it, so far as can be traced to anyone outside the SAS until the recent
discussions over the *Sunday Times* article.’ Harold Wilson commented: ‘Is it not clear
that HMG were involved? Or is it? In any case I am not involved. I was not there.’

The *Sunday Times*, with its scoop spoiled by the *Daily Telegraph*, lost interest in the
story. Major Gooley, the chief source for the story, told the FCO that the articles
would eventually appear and that the theme would be ‘to attack the power that
could wielded by a ‘small right wing group’, ignoring the elected Government of the
day and added that the Israeli involvement would certainly be mentioned.’ David
Stirling believed that he had killed off the story and the full story of British
government involvement in the mercenary campaign would remain a well-kept
secret for many decades. It is unclear what knowledge the Egyptians had of British
covert action during 1963. They certainly frequently complained about British
support for the Royalists. The second crucial point that is not clear is whether British
support for the royalists in Yemen led to the Egyptian directed campaign of
subversion that is often seen as beginning with the attempted assassination of
Trevakis in December 1963. Would the Egyptians have launched the offensive in any
case? Moreover, did the Egyptians control the terrorist campaign against the British
position in Aden or was it more organic? What is clear is that Anglo-Egyptian
relations would enter into a proxy war with the advantage mainly lying with Nasser,
who could make Aden and the Federation as hot for the British as they had made
Yemen for him.
During 1963, there were persistent breaches of the territories of the federated states by YAR/UAR forces, including shootings, occasional air attack and mine laying as well as frequent movements of tribesman across the frontiers. It would, however, be reasonable to suggest that YAR/UAR activities did not match the Imam’s activities of the late 1950s.  

There were fragments of intelligence that were worrying. An intelligence report in March 1963 spoke of the Sana’a authorities attempts to suborn Protectorate and Federal tribesmen in to armed service with the Republicans, and they were being trained in terrorist techniques in the Yemen and in Egypt and these would form the hard core of a "Liberation Army". In mid-February 1963, it was reported the YAR had created a ‘Ministry of Occupied South" whose task was to subvert the Federation. A month later, however, the ministry was described as a shadow i.e. meaningless. In the summer, there were mine attacks and reports of explosives sourced from Yemen and these were ‘grim portents’. It was felt that much would depend on the struggle in the Yemen ‘where should the- Republic with Egyptian support, succeed in establishing firm control over the Yemen, then the events of the last month set a pattern which we must expect to intensify during the months ahead.’ Consistent heavy firing from the Yemen across the border was a persistent thread in intelligence reports though November was remarkably quite. The intelligence report for that month noted that that ‘over the last few months a number of reports have been received of assistance being made available by the Republicans for causing trouble in the Federation and Protectorate, it seems clear that to date no substantial quantities of supplies have been released.’
The next month saw what appeared to be the opening of a violent campaign in Aden itself with the attempted assassination of Trevaskis at Khormaksar airport on 10 December 1963. A state of emergency was declared. According to Andrew Mumford, this brought the new Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas-Home around to the view that a much more aggressive strategy was needed to protect the Federation. The Aden group and Trevaskis both believed it would appear that the Egyptians were behind the attack a point seemingly confirmed by a very bellicose speech by Nasser on 23 December 1963, which explicitly declared Egyptian support for the liberation of Aden and Arabs could not accept Britain’s retention of part of the Arab nation when she had left all her other colonies. Nasser’s speech, in one sense, was a direct response to Duncan Sandys’ implication in the House of Commons that Cairo was ultimately the source of the attack on Trevaskis. Nasser frequently replied very swiftly to perceived insults from the west with ostentatious and vitriolic rhetoric in his speeches. It also reflected the UN General Assembly resolution calling for British withdrawal from Aden passed on 11 December. There is also the intriguing suggestion, from Jesse Ferris, that Nasser saw the opportunity to expose and break what he saw as the alliance between British imperialism and Saudi reaction. The Foreign Office was much more cautious arguing that too much was being read into one speech and the increased propaganda output from Cairo and Sana’ radio. The JIC (Middle East), likewise, remained skeptical that there was an Egyptian masterplan, much to the chagrin of Trevaskis.

For different reasons, nonetheless, both Egypt and Britain saw the December 1963 attack as a turning point. The inspiration behind the bombing may not have been
Egypt at all if one account is to be accepted. In 1966, the by now retired Sir Kennedy Trevaskis was told by Jaabil bin Hussein, a Federal leader, who flitted between Aden and Cairo in his politics, that while he had been in Cairo he had met with Al Asnag and his ‘henchman’ Basendwah. Basendwah had confirmed to Jaabil that the prime suspect Khalifa was the man who threw the bomb at Aden Airport in December 1963 that Al Asnag and he were the people who had organized the outrage. They had originally planned to blow up Trevaskis in the air. Stuart Roberts of the Foreign Office commented that if the story was correct and he had no reason to doubt it, ‘the UAR can probably be acquitted of any direct responsibility for the incident.’ The airport incident was, therefore, not ‘the opening shot in the major campaign of terrorism that has since been directed against South Arabia’; and it explained why there was ‘a period of some weeks should then have ensued before any further such action was taken by the Egyptians.’ 85 Daniel McCarthy, the political adviser to Middle Eastern Command, was less convinced arguing that the ‘generalised truth’ was that growing Egyptian frustration in the Yemen and tension in Aden ‘created an atmosphere in which the extremists thought violence was a good thing, and expected it to earn Cairo’s approval. In this, events were to show them right, whether or not they were sure of it in December, 1963.’ 86

The Federation intelligence reports, which had veered between concern and the downplaying of the Egyptian threat in 1963, from 1964 onwards now argued that the Egyptians were either ‘creating a diversion on their southern flank’ or really believed
that the British were supporting the Royalists. It concluded: ‘In any event and for whatever reason, all the indications are that the threat to our position in South Arabia long forecast caused by the Egyptian presence in the Yemen is now very much upon us.’\textsuperscript{87} Nasser switched his emphasis in speeches in early 1964 from the Yemen to the presence of British bases in the Middle East including Aden. His anger against Britain was accentuated by Sir Alec Douglas Home’s defense of Suez in a television interview and the March 1964 British retaliatory airstrike on the Yemeni fort of Harib. The latter incident, in particular, appears to have motivated him to take the ‘gloves off.’\textsuperscript{88}

The anticipated Egyptian inspired offensive, nonetheless, did not materialize until April 1964 in the Radfan, perhaps lending weight to the view that the EIS did not direct the December airport attack.\textsuperscript{89} The Radfan revolt, however, had the fingerprints of the Egyptians all over it. British intelligence assessments notoriously politicized and exaggerated by Trevaskis were at last correct. The Joint Intelligence Committee, which had tended to downplay the danger of Nasser to Aden, changed its mind. In June 1964, it concluded that Nasser wanted to maintain the YAR, eliminate the British presence in the Federation and the Aden base, and establish a ‘Cairo orientated Arab nationalist regime’ there. Nasser would avoid a direct military confrontation with Britain but was likely to foster tribal revolts. Moreover, it was presciently noted:

The Egyptians could step up their subversive effort. They could increase the hours of propaganda broadcasting; they could stimulate activity among other dissident elements; more Egyptian-trained tribesmen could be infiltrated as
potential trouble makers; more weapons and money could be provided; a policy of assassination could be encouraged. There have been several reports that the number of Egyptian intelligence officers in the Yemen has increased and that the Egyptians are providing increasing material aid not only for dissidents but also for terrorism by extremists in the Federation, including Aden State. As activity in the Radfan has recently shown, dissident forces are likely to be increasingly sophisticated in their equipment, training, and discipline.  

John Burke da Silva, a former head of station for the SIS in Bahrain wrote a long report on 7 July 1964 on developments in the Yemen between January and June 1964. This provided a classic view from Steamer Point of Nasser’s threat to Aden and the Federation. The previous review from September to December 1963 had concluded that Nasser had recently stepped up the subversion against Aden (notably the attempted assassination of Trevakis) to retrieve his position in the Yemen ‘by enlarging the problem and giving it a specifically anti-Colonialist character which it at present lacks. Events have confirmed this assessment.’ Nasser had explicitly in his Suez speech on 23 December 1963 called for the removal of all remaining British bases in the Middle East including Aden. Da Silva now believed that it was inevitable that he would continue to keep his troops in the Yemen. Da Silva argued that Nasser had three problems: firstly he had to prove that Sallal and the YAR was not simply an Egyptian puppet regime, which had necessitated broadening the government to maintain ‘the façade of its separate existence; secondly check the growing Royalist military successes, which had required the ramping up of Egyptian troop strength; ‘and thirdly to find an acceptable reason for his troops remaining in Yemen by
making it appear that they were ridding the Arab world of the last traces of Colonialism instead of, as was rapidly becoming evident, themselves "colonising" another Arab country. While Egyptian attempts to create National Liberation Army linked to the ‘so-called National Liberation Front under Qahtan As Shabi and other dissident leaders from the Federation’ had been mainly unsuccessful, considerable success was however achieved by Egyptian Intelligence officers based in Taiz who stirred up a dissident movement in Radfan by issuing arms and money from Qataba. The deployment of the British army and the RAF to crush it had provided ‘a unique opportunity for Nasser and for Egyptian propaganda of which full use was, and continues to be made.’ Nasser had succeeded in drawing the UN’s Committee of 24 and the Security Council and Nasser’s assertions that UAR troops were in the Yemen ‘only to defend the infant Republic from the predatory designs of the “imperialists” and of the Sherif of Baihan, (who had been cast in the role of the Arab bogey-man, feudal, tyrannical and hand-in-glove with all the enemies of Arab Nationalism).’ Da Silva concluded that the British position in Aden was now bleak:

More seriously from our point of view, Nasser has succeeded in stirring up the uneasy situation in Aden and the Federation to a point at which our position may soon become untenable. While he may or may not be able to maintain the pressure of dissident activities against the Federation, (as there is good evidence that Federal tribesmen are no more eager than their counterparts across the border to challenge superior military forces on any significant scale) they are at most no more than a means to an end, the end being the elimination of the British base. For this there are numerous other
weapons ready at hand, notably international pressures applied through the United Nations and other organisations, and the P.S.P. in Aden which could easily create a major international situation on its own. Nor would it be safe to assume that the elimination of the British presence in Aden is the limit of Nasser's ambitions in this part of the world.92

POSTSCRIPT

The Radfan revolt and the increasing evidence of Egyptian inspired subversion led to a lengthy debate in the summer of 1964 among British Cabinet Ministers on the issue of supplying increased support to the Royalists to counter the Egyptian inspired insurgency that they now faced. While the paper trail is by no means definitive, it would appear on the basis of the best evidence that we have that senior ministers demurred on the issue.93 The Conservative government lost the October 1964 General to the Labour Party, which was more amenable to dealing with nationalists in Aden and with Nasser. The genie, however, had come out of the bottle and the insurgency that would make the Aden Base and the South Arabian Federation untenable was now impossible to stop. Historians are divided on whether the Labour government was too passive in confronting the Egyptians, while others have argued that they broadly followed the Conservative government’s anti-Nasser line.94 It can be argued that Wilson’s government did its best to try to square an impossible circle with various strategies and initiatives to save the base, the Federation and come to some sort of *modus vivendi* with Nasser.95 In the final analysis, it is likely that no policy could have succeeded. The NLF, which would break with the Egyptians when
they attempted to force them into the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) in late 1966, had developed an unstoppable momentum. Radicalized by its links with the Arab National Movement, Nasser’s brand of Pan-Arabism had lost its appeal to NLF. British intelligence, it might be noted, continued to persist in the belief that Nasser controlled the NLF until very late in the day. In the last days of British rule in Aden the NLF would crush Nasser’s chosen proxies: FLOSY. This was achieved, according to some accounts, with the connivance of the British. The NLF would go on to make the first attempt to forge a Marxist state in the Middle East. Moreover, Nasser’s interests were almost entirely taken up with attempting to reverse the consequences of the 1967 Middle Eastern war. The long held view of many American diplomats that Britain’s obsession with Nasser would lead to even worse outcomes, from the perspective of the west at least, would materialize in the People’s Democratic Republic of the Yemen.

In January 1968, a little over six months since his catastrophic defeat to Israel in the 1967 June War and only a couple of months from the defeat of his FLOSY proxies, a British foreign office official, Denis Speares summarized reports from British missions in the Arab world on President’s Nasser’s standing. It provided an interesting insight into why Britain had both failed to come to terms with Nasser and the charisma that made him such a formidable opponent. There was general agreement with the view from the British embassy in Jedda that while his prestige had diminished, he remained the ‘leader of the Arab world ... who must be consulted on all Arab
problems.’ He still had ‘a magic and resilience that none of his rivals has ever approached.’ Speares continued: ‘he is established as part of a dream-world of Arab greatness and as the only recent Arab leader to achieve important status in the world at large.’ The Minister of State, Ivor Roberts on reviewing the various reports concluded:

His appeal is partly nationalistic, partly populist. He makes every Arab, everywhere, feel he is somebody; and he impresses the masses with his concern for their economic advancement. He has made mistakes, but they are seen to be the result of dedication to the right causes, so they are excused. His "magic" is complete identity with the twin yearnings of the Arabs everywhere, Arab unity and social improvement, and he is credited with considerable achievements despite setbacks. 99

____________________________
NOTES:
1 TNA CAB 191/12, LIC, The National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied South or the National Liberal (NLF), 25 January 1965
2 CAB158/54, JIC(64)77, ‘The Threat to South Arabia’, 8 March 1965.
3 The most comprehensive account of the role of the JIC in Yemen can be found in Rory Cormac (2013) ‘Coordinating Covert Action: The Case of the Yemen Civil War and the South Arabian Insurgency,’ Journal of Strategic Studies, 36:5, 692-717. See also his important study Rory Cormac, Confronting the Colonies British Intelligence and Counterinsurgency (London: Hurst, 2013), esp pp.105-56. Part of the reason for this skepticism was that the evidence provided from Aden for much of 1964 was worryingly circumstantial.
4 As I am dealing mainly with the pre-1965 period, I would draw attention to the material on IOR/R/20/D/213 File 7226/02/II Intelligence - Local Committee: Summaries May 1965-Jan 1967. Also important is the assertion from January 1966 by the Chief of intelligence in Aden in which he argued that attacks would continue unless there was a change in the Egyptian attitude. IOR/R/20/D/332 Extract from minute so the 15th meeting of the Operational executive held at 1130 hours on 19 Jan 1966 in the Security Secretariat. Even the Amnesty International report into allegations of torture at the Fort Morbut holding centre, which contributed to the halting of harsh interrogation methods in December 1966, was down to Cairo. IOR/R/20/D/213
Weekly Intelligence report No. 520 for period. 4 December to noon 11 December 1966. When the British suspended the Aden government in October 1965, it was reported that Mackawee (the sacked Aden chief Minister) and Khalifa (the chief suspect in the December 1963 attempted assassination of the High Commissioner) ‘are now all in the Egyptian bag.’ IOR/R/20/D/213, No.459 for period 5 October to noon 10 October 1965.


8 Simon C. Smith, Kuwait 1950-65: Britain, the al-Sabah and Oil (New York: Oxford University Press. 1999). p.135


10 It tended to be referred to as the ‘Persian’ rather than ‘Arabian’ Gulf during this period.

11 See TNA FO Confidential print 487/013, Record Of Meeting Of Heads Of Middle East Missions Held In The Foreign Office, July 23-24, 1959


13 A brief history of the Yemen is in Fred Halliday, Arabia without Sultans. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974) pp.90-104, which remains a mine of useful information on the NLF even if the New Left politics style in which it is written has become somewhat dated. On the initial stages of the war: Edgar O’Ballance, The War in the Yemen (London: Faber, 1972) p.10-35

14 On this point, see T. Hasou, The Struggle for the Arab World (London: Routledge, 1985), p.139. See also Laura M. James, Nasser at War: Arab Images of the Enemy (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp.51-68 who provides a lengthy analysis

15 See the various statements from Lord Lloyd (May 1956) Harold Watkinson (March 1962) and Alan Lennox-Boyd (1959) Darby, British defence policy East of Suez (London: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs,
A very important study is Glen Barbour Paul, Britain’s Relinquishment of Power in her last Three Arab Dependencies. (Cambridge, University Press, 1991) esp p.72
17 This included the protected states but did not include the Crown Colony. Barbour Paul. Britain’s Relinquishment p.74.
18 IOR/R/20/B/ 2548 Aden Intelligence Summaries 1953, ADEN INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 12 for the period ending the 31st Dec. 1953.
19 IOR/R/ B/2550 See the Monthly intelligence reports for July 1954, August, Sept 1954
20 IOR/R/ B/2550 Monthly intelligence report for August 1954 on Federation. However, though, Egyptian agitation against the Turco-Iraq pact was said to have found little favour with Adenis in early 1955 see the Monthly intelligence report for January 1955 on Turco-Iraqi pact from the same file.
21 IOR/R/ B/2550 Intelligence report for the month of May 1956.
22 See TNA FO371-120528 - Attitude of Egypt and Saudi Arabia towards Aden 1956 especially E1071/1 E.D. Hone (Aden) to J.C. Morgan, Colonial Office 7 August 1956
23 IOR/R/ B/2550 Monthly intelligence report for 1-31 July 1956
24 TNA CAB 128/32 Cabinet Conclusions 53 .2 10 July 1958
25 See Mawby, British Policy, p. 50
26 IOR R/20/B/3318 Intelligence centre Aden 18/19 January 1958 Yemeni subversion of Protectorate tribes
27 IOR R/20/B/3318 Intelligence centre Aden 29 June 1959 Subversion of tribes in the Protectorate tribes.
28 O’Ballance, The War in the Yemen, p.85
31 This included Julian Amery, the Minister for Aviation, Neil McLean, Maurice Macmillan, Hugh Fraser and Rowly Wynn. It is described in one account as a ‘right wing Shadow Cabinet’. See Dorrill, MI6, pp. 857-58 n.7.
34 FRUS XVIII 1961-63. Doc. 76. Memo Talbot-Rusk 9 Oct. 1962pp. 172-173. The Cabinet Conclusions for 9 Oct also seem to suggest that the majority of the Cabinet were not informed of the covert assistance that the Royalists had been given. The Prime Minister informed the Cabinet that this would be “politically repugnant”. TNA Cab 128/36 part 2, Cabinet Conclusions (62) 58. 1.
37 TNA PREM 11/3877, Note for the Record on meeting between the Prime Minister, the Colonial Secretary and the Foreign Secretary. 10 Oct 1962.
42 TNA CAB 139/112 (63). 3, 10 Jan. 1963 Memo by the SOSFA ‘The Yemen’. TNA CAB 128/38, Cabinet Conclusions 10 Jan. 1963
43 TNA PREM 11/4357, Home-Macmillan PM 63/9
47 TNA PREM 11/4356, Beeley(Cairo)-FO No.16. 8 Jan. 1962., Ormsby Gore desp 8 - Home. 8 Jan. 1963. VG 103145/1 TNA FO 371/ 172869
50 TNA CO1055/61, B1052/3/G, Luce (Bahrain) to Roger Stevens. 17 January 1963 and Stevens to Luce. 8 Feb 1963 See also Steven’s favourable comments on Nasser to the Americans in in the enclosures to the US National Archives. DOS-London No.2119. 31 May 1963. POLUK-US 1963. Box. 4081
51 TNA FO 371/ 172 872VG 1051/7. Beith addressed to Chancery 6 March 1963
52 Footnote 1. FRUS 1961-63, Vol. XVIII. p.487
53 TNA CAB 128/38, Cabinet Conclusions 29. 3. of 9 May 1963
54 TNA FO371/172876, VG1071/4, Beeley to Stevens 11 May 1963.
56 A detailed academic study is Clive Jones, Britain and the Yemen Civil War. A more gung-ho boys own account is Duff Hart-Davis, The War That Never Was. (London: Century, 2011). My own early views in the wider context of Anglo-Egyptian Relations are in Robert McNamara, Britain, Nasser and the Balance of Power.
58 TNA PREM 11/4929, Wright to PM. Meeting with FS/CS and MOD, 22 Nov. 1963.
See Nasser’s reaction to a mistaken belief that the US was going to stop sending food aid in November 1964 as described in M. Heikal, Nasser: The Cairo Documents, pp 204-205. He also appears to have been an assiduous reader of the British press with frequent references to the Daily Telegraph and the Times in his speeches. On this point see, Peter Mansfield, Nasser’s Egypt (Harmondsworth: London, 1965) p.89

83 Jesse Ferris, Nasser’s gamble, pp.220-221

84 Jones, Britain and the Yemen Civil War, p.88. Cromac, Confronting the Colonies, p.123
85 IOR/R/20/D/368 File 7403/04/II Terrorism: Incident at airport, 1963, Stuart Roberts to Frank Brenchley, 5 December 1966
86 IOR/R/20/D/368, D.J. McCarthy to W.N. Hillier-Fry, 17 December 1966
87 IOR/R/20/D/41 F1616B Intelligence summary Federation Intelligence Summary For The Period January 1964 No.1
88 See McNamara, Britain, Nasser and the Balance of Power, pp.175-188
89 IOR/R/20/D/41 F1616A Intelligence summary Federation Intelligence Summary For The Period February 1964. No.2
90 TNA DEFE 13/570 ADEN AND THE SOUTH ARABIAN FEDERATION Annex to COS 192/64 30 June 1964
91 Mark Curtis, Unpeople: Britain’s Secret Human Rights Abuses, (London: Vintage, 2004) , p. 296 says he was a key figure in controlling the supply of arms to Yemeni Royalists. Clive Jones names him as SIS officer who met with the mercenary commander, Colonel David Smiley. Jones, Britain and the Yemen Civil War, p. 174
92 IOR/R/26/D/90 Developments in the Yemen, January to June 1964 by J.B. da Silva, 7 July 1964
94 Jones, Britain and the Yemen Civil War, pp. 190-192, Mawby, British Policy, pp. 138-39
95 On this see McNamara, Britain, Nasser and the Balance of Power, pp.
96 They appear to have had inklings of the coming split as early as mid-1965 but again Aden viewed Nasser at the centre of everything and did not believe that any independent minded nationalist could stand up to him. See the reports on IOR/R/20/D/210 File 7226/02 Intelligence - Local Committee: Summaries No. 452 for period 1 5th August to noon 22nd August 1965, IOR/R/20/D/213, No. 457 for period 19th September to noon 26th September 1965, No, 493 for period 29 May to noon 5 June 1966,
97 Mawby, British Policy, pp.174-76
99 TNA FCO 39/242 President Nasser’s Standing in the Arab World Foreign Office Memo (DJ Speares), 22 January 1968