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Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG)
Friday, January 17, 1986
Situation Room White House
5:30 p.m.

I. Introduction Chairman

II. Intelligence Assessment CIA

A. Situation report

B. Current and anticipated Soviet next steps

C. Outside intervention

III. Diplomatic Situation State

A. Status of U.S. response to Ryadh

B. Discussions with YAR

C. Exchanges with other governments, e.g. UK, PRC, Egypt, France

IV. Next Steps All

A. Can the U.S. deter Ethiopian Cuban and/or Soviet intervention

B. Likely Saudi response to our initiative

C. Offer of humanitarian and/or other assistance to successive regime



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PAGE 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 0295
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 00295

LONDON FOR RAPHEL

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E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, MOPS, YS, SA, ET
SUBJECT: INFORMATION REGARDING SITUATION IN ADEN
AS OF 2300 JANUARY 17

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. AT DINNER HOSTED BY DCM FOR VARIOUS MILITARY ATTACHES AND DIPLOMATS JANUARY 17 THE FOLLOWING WAS ASCERTAINED. WE ARE AWARE THAT PERHAPS MUCH OF THE FOLLOWING IS KNOWN BY CERTAIN ADDRESSEES BUT FORWARD THE INFORMATION FOR WHAT WE VALUE ADDRESSEES MIGHT FIND USEFUL.

3. ALGERIAN EMBASSY HAS BEEN DEMOLISHED WITH ONE OF ITS CLERKS KILLED. THE CLERK WAS KILLED NEAR HIS HOME AND NOT AT EMBASSY.

4. UK EMBASSY HAS NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY DAMAGED THOUGH THE RESIDENCE OF COM HAS. THE BRITISH HAVE TWO RAF PLANES ON STANDBY WITH OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE FROM THE ETHIOPIANS TO EVACUATE THEIR STAFF TO DJIBOUTI.

5. ITALIAN EMBASSY HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY DAMAGED. THERE IS NO REPEAT NO INFORMATION REGARDING AN EVACUATION OF THEIR STAFF.

6. FRG EMBASSY HAS BEEN DAMAGED AND THEY ARE TRYING TO MOVE OUT THEIR PERSONNEL TO DJIBOUTI, PROBABLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH UK.

7. FIGHTING CONTINUES NEAR THE PORT ACCORDING TO VARIOUS KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES IN ADDIS ABABA AND A

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PAGE 02 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 0295

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LARGE AMMUNITION DUMP DESCRIBED AS NEAR THE PORT AND
THE DIPLOMATIC ENCLAVE HAS BEEN DESTROYED.

8. GDR MILITARY ATTACHE HAS CONFIRMED THAT ETHIOPIAN
PARATROOPS AT SHASHEMENE HAVE BEEN ON ALERT FOR
MOVEMENT INTO THE PDRY BEGINNING O/A JANUARY 14.
THE TROOPS HAVE NOT MOVED AND HE DOES NOT REPEAT NOT
EXPECT THEM TO BECOME INVOLVED. (COMMENT: WE AGREE
WITH THE APPRAISAL OF THE GDR ATTACHE.) FROM ANOTHER
SOURCE WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THAT THERE IS NO REPEAT NO
UNUSUAL ACTIVITY AT DIRE DAWA AIRPORT WHICH WOULD LEAD
US TO BELIEVE THAT THIS STRATEGIC AIRPORT IS OR WILL BE
USED FOR MOVEMENT OF ETHIOPIAN TROOPS INTO THE PDRY
AT THIS TIME. CHEEK
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LIBYAN
South Yemen

PAGE 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 00942

E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MOPS, PREL, UR, YE, UK
SUBJECT: SOVIET ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN SOUTH YEMEN

REF: A) SANAA 367. B) MOSCOW 00706

1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY: UK EMBOFF PROVIDED READOUT JANUARY 17 ON BRITISH CONTACTS IN MOSCOW WITH THE SOVIETS ON THE SOUTH YEMEN CRISIS. ACCORDING TO THE EMBOFF, THE SOVIETS ARE COOPERATING IN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND PLANNING FOR EVACUATION OF CITIZENS, AND ARE TRYING TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE WARRING SIDES. OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES DO NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIETS WILL INTERVENE, AS THEY DO NOT SEE THEIR INTERESTS THREATENED, WHOEVER WINS. AFTER A TWO-DAY HIATUS, COVERAGE OF THE COUP RETURNED TO THE SOVIET MEDIA AS POLITBURO MEMBER GEYDAR ALIYEV MET WITH PDRY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMAN ATTAS, WHO ARRIVED IN MOSCOW FROM NEW DELHI.
3. DESPITE THEIR EXPRESSIONS OF CONFIDENCE TO THE

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PAGE 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942

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BRITISH, THE SOVIETS MAY WELL BE CONCERNED LEST TURMOIL IN THE PDY ROB THEM OF THEIR PRIMARY Foothold ON THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. IF THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE CONTINUES TO ESCALATE, WE WOULD NOT RULE OUT A LIMITED EFFORT BY MOSCOW TO BEEF UP THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF ITS EMBASSY, COMMUNICATION INSTALLATION, AND OTHER SENSITIVE FACILITIES, IN THE PDY. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHARE OUR BRITISH COLLEAGUES' ESTIMATE THAT A SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION TO AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF THE COUP IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY GIVEN THE EXPECTATION THAT SOVIET INTERESTS CAN BE PROTECTED BY OTHER MEANS AND THE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES MOSCOW WOULD FACE IN MOBILIZING AND SUSTAINING THE FORCES NECESSARY TO ENSURE A RAPID AND SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION. END SUMMARY.

REPORTED SOVIET COOPERATION, CONFUSION

4. UK EMBOFF JANUARY 17 PROVIDED READOUT OF UK CONTACTS WITH THE SOVIET MFA ON THE CRISIS IN SOUTH YEMEN, INCLUDING A JANUARY 16 CALL ON FIRST DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER KORNIYENKO BY UK AMBASSADOR CARTLEDGE (UK EMBOFF ASKED THAT THE FACT THIS MEETING TOOK PLACE BE CLOSELY HELD). ACCORDING TO THE EMBOFF, THE SOVIETS ARE BEING VERY COOPERATIVE IN EXCHANGING

INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION AND IN PLANNING EVACUATION OF SOVIET AND WESTERN CITIZENS FROM ADEN. EMBOFF RELATED THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT FULLY INFORMED ABOUT THE SITUATION AND ARE UNCERTAIN WHAT THE OUTCOME OF THE FIGHTING WILL BE. HE SAID THE SOVIETS WERE NOT SURE WHETHER THE FOUR REPORTED COUP LEADERS REPORTEDLY EXECUTED ON THE FIRST DAY HAVE ACTUALLY BEEN KILLED. THE SOVIETS WERE ALSO NOT SURE WHO WAS LEADING THE COUP ATTEMPT, ALTHOUGH THEY BELIEVED IT WAS DEFENSE MINISTER QASIM.

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PAGE 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942
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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 1058
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 MOSCOW 00942

E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MOPS, PREL, UR, YE, UK
SUBJECT: SOVIET ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION IN SOUTH YEMEN

SOVIET MEDIATION

5. UK--EMBOFF SAID THE SOVIETS WERE TRYING TO PROMOTE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE OPPOSING FACTIONS. THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR JANUARY 16 MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH SIDE, BUT THE MEDIATION ATTEMPT FAILED AND FIGHTING RESUMED. ACCORDING TO UK EMBOFF THE SOVIETS HERE HAVE INDICATED THAT MOSCOW DISSUADED QADHAFI FROM GIVING ASSISTANCE (A LINE WHICH TRACKS WITH SOVIET EMBOFF'S STATEMENT TO FRG EMBOFF REFTEL).

EVACUATION PLANS

6. UK EMBOFF TOLD US THAT THE SOVIETS, THE FRENCH, AND THE BRITISH ARE CURRENTLY WORKING ON PLANS TO EVACUATE SOVIET AND WESTERN CITIZENS FROM ADEN. THE FIGHTING IS ENDANGERING EVERYONE: BOTH THE UK AND SOVIET EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN HIT, WHILE THE WEST GERMAN EMBASSY HAS BEEN DEMOLISHED. ACCORDING TO THE BRIT, THESE COUNTRIES ARE

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

PAGE 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942

DTG: 171540Z JAN 86 PSN: 046010

CONSIDERING EVACUATING WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM BEACHES DURING A LULL IN THE FIGHTING.

DOUBTS OF POSSIBLE SOVIET INTERVENTION

7. THE UK EMBOFF SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE SOVIETS WOULD INTERVENE IN SOUTH YEMEN, ALTHOUGH THEY PREFERRED ALI NASIR MUHAMMAD. ACCORDING TO THE BRITISH, THE SOVIETS BELIEVE THAT THEIR INTERESTS WOULD BE PRESERVED NO MATTER WHO WINS. IN THE BRITISH VIEW, THE SOVIETS SAW THE COUP ATTEMPT AS RESULTING FROM PERSONAL FEUDS RATHER THAN POLITICAL OR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES. MOREOVER, BOTH SIDES IN THE CURRENT FIGHTING HAVE CLAIMED THEY WANT TO MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. THE UK EMBOFF SPECULATED THAT THE SOVIETS DID NOT KNOW ABOUT THE COUP ATTEMPT BEFOREHAND--I. E. THAT THE PLOTTERS KEPT THEIR PLANS SECRET FROM THE MULTITUDE OF SOVIET OFFICIALS IN ADEN, IN PART BECAUSE ANY COUP COULD UNDERMINE SOVIET EFFORTS TO BROADEN RELATIONS IN THE GULF AND ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA.

RENEWED SOVIET MEDIA ATTENTION

8. MEANWHILE, THE SOVIET CENTRAL (RUSSIAN-LANGUAGE) MEDIA JANUARY 17 CARRIED ITS FIRST REPORTS ON THE CRISIS SINCE JANUARY 14. PRAVDA PUBLISHED A NEUTRAL TASS REPORT FROM KUWAIT. ACCORDING TO TASS, THE OPPOSING SIDES HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO CARRY OUT A CEASEFIRE UNDERSTANDING IN A NUMBER OF AREAS, COMMUNICATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES ARE TENUOUS, AND THE WHEREABOUTS OF VARIOUS PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE UNCERTAIN. THE DISPATCH CONCLUDES THAT "STEPS" HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN TO END THE FIGHTING, NORMALIZE THE SITUATION, AND RENEW GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.
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PAGE 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 MOSCOW 00942

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ALIYEV--PDRY OFFICIALS MEET

9. ACCORDING TO ANOTHER PRAVDA ARTICLE, PDRY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS CHAIRMAN ATTAS, FOREIGN MINISTER DALI, AND MINISTER OF TRADE AND SUPPLY FADLI ARRIVED IN MOSCOW JANUARY 16 FROM NEW DELHI. PRAVDA REPORTED THAT POLITBURO MEMBER GEYDAR ALIYEV AND "OTHER OFFICIALS" MET THE SOUTH YEMENI PARTY AT THE AIRPORT. ALTHOUGH THE PRAVDA REPORT DESCRIBED THE VISIT AS A "STOPOVER," OUR UK COLLEAGUE TOLD US THAT THE PDRY OFFICIALS ARE STILL IN MOSCOW.

COMMENT

10. THE ALIYEV-ATTAS MEETING UNDERSCORES MOSCOW'S SERIOUS CONCERN OVER THE CURRENT TURMOIL IN THE PDRY, IN PART BECAUSE OF THE IMMEDIATE THREAT TO SOVIET PERSONNEL AND INSTALLATIONS. MOREOVER,

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PAGE 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 0942

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DESPITE THEIR EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE EVENTUAL WINNER WILL HAVE TO RETAIN CLOSE TIES TO MOSCOW, THE SOVIETS MAY WELL BE APPREHENSIVE THAT AN UNFORESEEN TURN IN THE STRUGGLE COULD ULTIMATELY ROB THEM OF THEIR PRIMARY Foothold ON THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. IF VIOLENCE CONTINUES TO ESCALATE, WE WOULD NOT RULE OUT A SOVIET EFFORT TO BEEF UP THE PHYSICAL SECURITY OF THEIR EMBASSY, COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY, AND OTHER SENSITIVE FACILITIES IN THE PDRY. HOWEVER, IN THE ABSENCE OF EVIDENCE OF A MAJOR BUILD-UP OF SOVIET FORCES IN THE AREA AND A CLEAR THREAT TO SOVIET INTERESTS THERE, WE SHARE THE BRITISH ASSESSMENT THAT A SOVIET INTERVENTION TO AFFECT THE OUTCOME OF THE COUP IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. THE SOVIETS ARE WELL AWARE THAT SUCH AN INTERVENTION WOULD INVOLVE POTENTIALLY HEAVY POLITICAL COSTS AND RISKS OF ESCALATION. IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVE THE SOVIETS WOULD BE EXTREMELY WARY OF MILITARY MOVES WHEN THEY RETAIN OTHER OPTIONS FOR PROTECTING THEIR INTERESTS AND DO NOT HAVE MILITARY FORCES DEPLOYED IN THE AREA SUFFICIENT TO ENSURE THAT AN INTERVENTION WOULD BE RAPID AND EFFECTIVE. HARTMAN
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THE SITUATION IN SOUTH YEMEN
17 January 1986

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President Hasani's forces appear to have established control over most areas of Aden, [Redacted] Some rebel forces remain holed up in the port and the Tawahi area of the city:

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-- [Redacted] troops in the garrisons in Little Aden, who had remained neutral during most of the conflict, have thrown their support to Hasani.

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-- Damage to facilities in Aden from the fighting is extensive.

-- [Redacted] tribal supporters of both sides are mobilizing north and northeast of the capital and that sporadic fighting between tribal militia units is occurring in other areas of the country.

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In our judgment the fighting, which has temporarily tapered off, is at a critical juncture:

-- With Hasani apparently in control of Aden his primary opponents may flee the country, with their tribal backers falling in line behind the government.

-- Alternatively, the rebels could opt to rally their tribal forces north of the capital and make a renewed grab for power. If they do, the fighting likely will spread to areas near the borders with North Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

[Redacted]

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The conflict in South Yemen has been building since October when neither of the two leading factions proved strong enough to eliminate their opponents at the ruling Party Congress:

-- All leading South Yemeni politicians are leftists, but relatively moderate President Hasani, supported by the provincial governor Muhammad Ali Ahmad, has been trying to improve relations with moderate Arab states and to open the country to the West. We believe both men are alive and leading the government forces.

-- President Hasani has been opposed by a hard-line faction led by former President Ismail, Deputy Premier Ali Antar, and Minister of Defense Qasim. The status of the rebel leaders remain unclear but we believe that at least the Minister of Defense was leading rebel forces on Thursday.

[Redacted]

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-- All these leaders represent powerful South Yemeni tribes. Tribal affiliations are very important in South Yemen and ultimately determine the loyalty of military and militia units.

[Redacted]

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

17 January 1986
1600 EST

*See date to Tais
Six flight
US want help him*

SPOT COMMENTARY: South Yemeni Situation

Soviet efforts to arrange a ceasefire are not succeeding. Press reports indicate fighting is continuing in Aden, although no rebel air strikes have been reported today. [redacted] President Hasani's forces have control of much of the capital but that rebel forces remain in the port and the Tawahi area. The evacuation of diplomatic personnel from Aden involving Soviet ships began late Friday [redacted]

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hand:*

[redacted]

[redacted]

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Comment: Rebel forces appear to be on the defensive and pro-government forces may be preparing a major assault on the main rebel base at Al Anad airfield. We expect that heavy fighting may resume this weekend as Hasani's forces attempt to eliminate rebel pockets in the capital. [redacted]

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An Ethiopian military intervention on behalf of Hasani would serve Soviet purposes in "defending" a client state without using its own troops, which would provoke a strong negative response in Saudi Arabia and other states in the region. An intervention also would play to Mengistu's pretensions to be a "defender of socialism." Moreover, Hasani and Mengistu have a close personal relationship. Ethiopian intervention, however, could provoke intervention by North Yemen, which also supports Hasani but would be very distrustful of Ethiopian intentions. [redacted]

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S E C R E T

A. Intelligence Assessment

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G. South Yemen's Importance to the USSR

H. Possible Options for Supporting the Moderates

[Redacted]

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South Yemen's Importance to the USSR

Syria is the Soviets' most important client in the Arab world, but South Yemen is their closest. Whereas in Syria, Moscow has a presence throughout the military but almost nowhere else, in South Yemen, the Soviets--along with their East European and Cuban allies--permeate the entire government, party, and military structure. The Soviets have approximately 1500 military and 500 economic advisers and technicians in South Yemen. The USSR is integrally linked--politically, militarily, economically, and ideologically--with the PDRY, the first and only Marxist government in the Arab world. Only one government in the Middle East, Babrak Karmal's regime in Afghanistan, is more dependent on the Soviets for its existence than is South Yemen. [redacted]

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The Soviets' interests in the PDRY--a dismally poor country of little more than two million people--stem from its Marxist orientation and its strategic location. The Soviets value the PDRY as the only thing they have to show for almost seventy years of trying to foster the growth of Marxist regimes in the Arab world. They promote South Yemen as a model for other Middle Eastern states to follow and work with it to aid leftist movements in the region. Aden is a haven for Middle Eastern Communists, leftist Palestinians, and the remnants of Marxist insurgents who once fought in neighboring Oman and North Yemen. [redacted]

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South Yemen's location at the confluence of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean gives it military significance for the Soviet Union. Naval ships of the Soviet Indian Ocean Squadron make regular use of the port facilities at Aden*,

*Since 1980, Soviet Indian Ocean ships have made an average of about 75 visits annually to Aden. The port, however, is heavily congested with

[redacted]

and Moscow keeps two IL-38 naval reconnaissance aircraft at al-Anad airfield, north of Aden, on a continuous basis. These aircraft provide the Soviets with a continuous aerial surveillance capability in the northern Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Arabian Sea, and are used most frequently to monitor US naval activity in the region, especially the movement of aircraft carriers. [redacted]

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In addition, the Soviet naval communications facility that was originally installed in Somalia was moved to Salah al-din, just northwest of Aden, in 1978. A signal intelligence facility that allows continuous monitoring of communications throughout the Middle East and Indian Ocean region was established at Salah al-din in 1981. [redacted]

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[redacted]

Prior to this week's attempted coup, Moscow's relations with Hasani appeared to be solid. The Kremlin had misgivings about his opening to the West and moderate Arabs, but the two sides seemed to have resolved any major differences on this issue by late 1983. Frictions over PRDY displeasure with the level of Soviet economic aid are constant but were no threat to the overall relationship. The Soviets probably saw the pro-Moscow Ismail's return to the PDRY as a useful "insurance policy" to keep Hasani honest, but we do not believe they favored his grab for the leadership. From Moscow's vantage point, Hasani, though not as ideologically "pure" as Ismail, probably is viewed as loyal and more adept than Ismail at governing the PDRY. [redacted]

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commercial traffic, and Soviet combatants usually use the anchorage off South Yemen's Socotra Island or the port facilities the Soviets have on Ethiopia's Dahlak Island.

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