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INSURRECTION IN OMAN

An essay dealing with the history and
course of the present war being waged
in the province of Dhofar, Southern
Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman (until 1970 known as Muscat and Oman) occupies most of the S.E. corner of the Arabian Peninsula and has an existence apart from its vast neighbour Saudi Arabia which looks, on the map, to have edged out that confraternity of petty states on its periphery to the sea. Enclosed on three sides by the sea - on the north by the Persian Gulf, on the east by the Gulf of Oman, and on the south by the Arabian Sea - it is cut off on the fourth from the bulk of the peninsula by the sand wastes of the Rub-al-Khali, or Empty Quarter. A dominant theme which has influenced much of the character of Oman is the relationship of the mountains and sea. Geologically, the Arabian Peninsula is an ancient formation. Most of the present land area of Oman was submerged beneath the sea when, at an unknown geological date, the black igneous rocks which were eventually to evolve into the Hajar Mountains poured forth from enormous submarine volcanoes. Later, in Jurassic periods fossiliferous limestone sediments were laid down on the sea bed until in a later geological age the whole bed was thrust upwards to form the convoluted mountain shapes that dominate Oman from the Musandam Peninsula in the Persian Gulf to Ras al Hadd. To the east of this range, lying between it and the sea is a narrow plain, the Batinah, ten to twenty miles broad which begins in the north near Fujaira and ends 150 miles further south near Muscat, where the Hajar Mountains abut on the sea. On the inner side of the Hajar, the land falls away to a bare and rock strewn plain, crossed by numerous straggling wadis and merges at length with gravel plains which stretch away to the Rub al Khali.

Cutting through the Hajar at intervals are a number of wadis which allow access from the Batinah coast to the interior. The greatest of these, the Wadi Samail, splits the Hajar into two halves, eastern and western. Only a thin ridge separates the head of the

Wadi Samail, running eastward to the Gulf of Oman, from the second greatest Wadi in Oman, the Wadi Halfain, which runs due south almost to the Arabian Sea. Towering above the Samail gap is the Jebel Akhbar, a formidable cluster of peaks 10,000' or more in height, the highest of the entire Hajar range. Eastern Oman is a mixture of gravel plains and stony steppe whilst the province of Dhofar, to which the subject is restricted, is peculiarly verdant - the 120 mile stretch of Qara Mountains being the only area on the whole Arabian coastline to attract the S.W. Indian monsoon. The result is that the Jabal, on the seaward side where the rain falls, is a jungle terrain, whilst beyond, on the steppes to the sands, the topography portrays the more characteristic traits of Arabian geography with a bleak, barren, limestone syncline leading to the gravel strewn plains at the edge of the Great Sands. It is these mountains themselves which in turn protect much of Dhofar from the parching, sterilising winds of the Empty Quarter. Thus this strip of mountains and the narrow coastal plain onto which it abuts has a rainfall far in excess of any other part of the country, and un-failing in its regularity. The plain, on which Salala, the Sultan's summer residence is built, is about 50 miles in length and five miles at its maximum width, and particularly fertile. Coconut palms are the principal crop but this well watered plain has much potential, and dates, bananas and limes are also grown for export. The hills are covered with a scrubby semi-jungle, mostly *acacia* and varieties, and the mountain wadis would appear to be the ancient source of frankincense which is still marketed to India. Villages are established around sources of water and the historical absence of strong central rule, coupled with the physical configuration of the mountains has established strong characteristics of Jebali society. The inter-dependence of the enclaves of settled territory on the

plains is offset by the isolation of the valleys, and this isolation from one another and from the world outside has made them rancorous, suspicious, and vengeful. Within the Jebel every valley is defensively and economically independent whilst individual villages are themselves self sufficient and in most cases fortified by stone Qaers or keeps. Life in Dhofar, as throughout Oman is harsh, and its aspect medieval.

The population of Dhofar, generally estimated to number about 60,000 is organized on an almost exclusively tribal basis and the tribesmen are different in outlook and characteristics from those of the North where the original Arab stock has been strongly infused with Negro, Indian and Baluch blood. The inhabitants of the two regions have little in common and all are held in contempt by the Jebali. The Qarra and Shahara are semi-nomadic pastoral peoples who live on Jebal Qara and who retain much pre-Islamic ritual in their custom and rites. Although paying lip service to Islam, they understand little of its theology and are at heart animists. As in most tribal societies in Arabia, Huks al Hauz, or a system of precedents and ancient sanctions, is the law - this varies regionally but is generally based upon the eye for eye principle, that the punishment may fit the crime. The Sharia or Islamic Code is distasteful to them and runs only where the government can impose it by force.

Their life revolves round their cattle and though they graze them extensively they are not nomadic, and tribal clashes have invested dhara with a proprietary right. Thus, territories are passed down from father to son and a few crops and frankincense harvested within the environs of each groups 'dara'. Their language is

complicated and has no known written form though Bertram Thomas found it had close affinities with Somali and Ethiopic. It is probably related closely to the ancient Semitic dialects of S.W. Arabia though the key for their translation has yet to be found.

Similar inscriptions have been found on the trilith monuments of the Qara Mountains, as have been revealed in excavations of ancient sites in South Arabia. Of the different Dhufari tribal groups the Jebali's have always fared least favourably and are an equiescent group when the dividing line between prestige and discredit is the power and will to fight, and the corporate consciousness to accept acts by his fellow tribesmen as binding on himself - with all the consequences that it may involve in a land where murder and the blood feud prevail.

The Bedouin of Northern Dhofar are of sub-divisions of the Bait Kathir and Mahra tribes although other minority groups are represented. They inhabit the whole southern borderland of steppe that separates the watershed of the Qara from the sands. This steppe is arid and desolate, capable of supporting only nomad bedouin. The summer drought drives them back into the mountain courses around the perennial water holes but immediately after rain they sally out again and in the winter may remain for a month or two in favoured localities. It is a hungry and thirsty life and those whose habitat is the hinterland of Dhofar are driven back to the settled comfort of the frankincense orchard, especially during the summer when its comparatively rich rewards are the means of obtaining rifles, ammunition, clothes, coffee and sometimes rice. But the true Bedouin despise any but their spartan existence. They live mainly on camels milk and hold life cheap. Arms, ammunition and

the health of the camel are the primary necessities of life and fighting and war are held as unquestionably honourable. The Bait Kathir owe their origin to the Kathiri tribes of the Hadhranaut, whilst the Mehra have spread eastwards from the extreme western region of the Yemen border along the the mountains and wadi complexes extending north from Ghediat al Mehra. This dispersal with its concomitant ties of kinship has greatly aided the provision of a secure supply line for the guerrillas from the Yemeni border. The Bedouin are herisman and water and grazing for their camel and goat herds are their prime concern.

The scarcity of water and the paucity of grazing make them very jealous of what is theirs and they are very quick to defend any real or imagined infringement of their rights - a trait which is exploited by dissidents. Gradually they are acquiring land on the edges of settlements and many may be classed semi-bedouin.

The relationship between the mountains and the sea in Oman is a manifestation of the dichotomy which exists between the peoples of the jebel and the peoples of the coast. The former have throughout recorded history been in conflict with the people of the coast. Their attitude is conservative and inward looking, based on the tenets of their religion and the needs of their subsistence economy. On the other hand the people of the towns and seaports enjoy a higher standard of living and greater degree of sophistication than in the jebel. Contact with the outside world has developed through a long history of maritime trade, enabling many to attain at least the rudiments of education. The majority of the town tribes, the Bait Ruwas, Marahoon, Shawafir, and Sa'da are from the Hadhranaut by origins, and ethnically the Thofars are linked more

to the Hadramut and Africa than to N. Oman. These tribes are settled and distributed amongst the coastal towns where they are employed in the whole gamut of occupations that a town offers. On the plain they are often agricultural farmers, labourers, or soldiers. Alongside these indigenous tribes are many other communities embracing Islam and speaking Arabic, but not Arab. The largest of these is the Baluch community which is strongly represented in the Sultan's Army. The Makran Coast of Baluchistan, and the port of Gwadar, which was part of Oman until 1958 have always supplied emigrants to the coasts of Oman. There is even a tribe, the Bani Baluch, descendants of a force of soldiers recruited in Makran in 1736, and now completely integrated into Omani society, living as an Arab tribe.

In the coastal towns also are many people of African origin whose ancestors came to live in Oman at the time of the long association with Zanzibar and the east coast of Africa. The importance of Oman as a trading centre in the past is also emphasised by the Indian community, some of them now the third generation born in Oman.

Regarding the indigenous tribes of Dhofar it would appear from a consideration of language, tradition and culture that they are more kindred with Hamites on the other side of the Red Sea than the familiar Arab of Central and North Arabia. Both Maitland and Thomas in their skull measurements of the Dhofari's have revealed them to be round headed people whilst the rest of the Arabs in the peninsula are long headed. The conclusion reached regarding the racial nature of these Arabs is that they represent a residue of Hamitic population which at one time occupied the whole of Arabia,

only to evolve through invasion, immigration and miscegenation into the now numerically superior race of the Semites.

As though their mutual rivalries and dislikes were not sufficient cause for dissension, the tribes are split into two distinct and opposing factions, the Hinawi and the Chafiri. The origin of this factionalism is difficult to determine. Some authorities find it in a series of civil wars which ravaged the country in the eighteenth century: others trace it back to the original settlement of the country by the Arabs. Immigration into Oman from S.W. Arabia began as early as the 9th century B.C. and continued at intervals for at least 10 centuries afterwards. These Yemeni tribes, as they were called, had the country very much to themselves until the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. when a new series of immigrations began, this time from north, central and eastern Arabia. The newcomers, collectively known as the Mizari tribes, settled, not without considerable opposition from the Yemenis. As a general rule the tribes of Yemeni origin may be identified with the Hinawi faction, those of Mizari origin with the Chafiri. The factions derive their names from two tribes, the Bani Hina and the Bani Chafir which furnished the chief protagonists in the eighteenth century struggle already alluded to. Apart from these differences of origin, the Hinawi and Chafiri tribes may be distinguished by their religious beliefs. While the Chafiri tribes are mainly orthodox Sunni Muslim, the majority of the Hinawi tribes belong to an offshoot of Islam, Ibadiya.

Ibadiya dates from the first century of the Muslim era when the first Ibadis, so named from their leader Abdullah Ibn Ibad, disassociated themselves from the Khawarij, who had earlier rebelled

against the yoke of Caliphate domination, and denied the claimed hereditary right of the Quraysh to the leadership of Islam. They fought for what they asserted was the original democratic system for the election of a leader. This leader, or Imam could be elected out of the whole community from candidates who possessed the appropriate spiritual and personal qualities of character. Because of its remoteness from the centre of Islam and because of its geography, which made communication to and from Oman difficult, the Ibadis found refuge in the mountains of Oman where their doctrines quickly took root amongst the Yemeni tribes. A movement which had at its heart the principle of a spiritual leader elected democratically from its own numbers would be in an even stronger position to reject the demands of a centralised temporal power. The Omanis, as Ibadis, do not regard themselves as a breakaway sect, but as the true Muslims and their leader was styled Imam of the Muslims. The Ibadhi creed became a rallying point around which Omanis fought for their independence. From the time of the first Imam, Oman suffered no fewer than ten successive waves of invasion over a period of little more than 200 years - the most severe of which was the devastation of Oman in the ninth century A.D. by an army sent by the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad in response to a plea for help from the Sunni Muzari tribes of N. Oman. Each invasion was ultimately defeated, as much by difficult terrain, distance, and poor communications as by the fierce resistance of Omanis in defence of their faith and way of life.

Once external invaders were overcome, however, the force of tribal mistrust and rivalry would become dominant and all that had been gained in unity and common objectives would be lost again in internal strife and civil war. The concept of State was of a loose tribal confederation linked by a spiritual concept, Ibadism, well

suitable to its geographical location and the political needs and desires of its peoples. The organization of government was simple with Walis, Qadis, and a few Askars as the outward manifestation of Inamate rule - a system which is little changed today. There was no large army, police force or civil service and the Imam's authority depended on the will of the majority of people to support him. The remoteness of the country, its isolation and the fragmentation of society by geographical factors into a number of isolated largely self-contained communities has worked against any great feeling of lasting national unity. The most significant result of this innate propensity to differ violently with one's neighbour has been the erosion of Oman's agricultural potential and the decay of the ancient Falaj system of irrigation upon which that agriculture is dependent.

From the end of the 10th century A.D. to the early 17th much of the history of Oman is lost and it seems to have been a "Dark Age" of tyranny and foreign domination. Thus Oman slumbered until the Portuguese, and after them the English, Dutch and French, traders arrived off her coasts. Following the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 and the great expansion of Turkish power, the trade routes of the European nations with India were seriously impeded. Alternatives were sought and found round the coast of Africa bringing the Portuguese to Oman as fore-runners of yet another major influence which has shaped the development of society. They established bases in the coastal towns where architectural evidence of this sojourn still remains, although their stay was caustory. The dissension regarding the interpretation of the Inamate emerged in the eighteenth century and split Oman irrevocably into two opposing camps. The office of Imam had acquired a temporal significance almost equal to its spiritual importance by this time - the result of the long struggles of the Sect to remain in being.

In 1723 the struggle was confined to the Bani Hiwas and Bani Ghafir tribes whose respective Sheikhs were competing for the office. At its agreed conclusion 20 years later most of the tribes had been sucked into the melee. The southern or Yemeni tribes as a whole supported the Bani Hiwa, the northern or Nizari tribes the Bani Ghafir. Although both of the leaders of the original factions were killed in battle, the names of the factions continued and the bitterness and suspicion engendered during 30 years of civil war is still not dead in Oman, and no ruler can hope to succeed unless he has the support of both factions. Chastened by Persian attack the two sides suspended their feud in 1749 to elect an Imam from the Hinawi faction. With the advent of Al Bu Said to power a change took place in the nature of political power in Oman. Hitherto the Imams of Oman had derived their authority from their position as tribal leaders, from their influence with neighbouring tribes, and from their personal standing as territorial lords. Ahmad Ibn Said was a merchant and ship owner. He derived his strength largely from his maritime resources and from his commercial ventures abroad, and his successors among the Al Bu Said followed in the same path. Under his dynasty Muscat flourished as a trading centre and a regular army and navy built up - contrary to the spirit of the early Ibadhis but a result of the fratricidal wars, when it had been demonstrated that the spiritual ideal of the Imamate had to be backed with considerable temporal power and authority if the society was to survive. The transfer of the capital from the interior to the coast - it had for centuries been located at the Ibadhi stronghold of Nizwa in central Oman, was symbolic of the change to come, henceforth the power of Al Bu Said was to rest upon the sea and not the land. This transfer of the capital was the beginning of a concept of "Muscat and Oman" instead of Oman as a whole nation, and served to accentuate the position of the coastal community at the expense of the interior

mountain community. Ahmad's eldest son Said succeeded him as Imam but exercised temporal power for only a year, being supplanted as ruler of Oman by his own son though he continued to discharge the duties of his spiritual office until his death. None of the Al Bu Said rulers attempted to appropriate the dignity or office of Imam to himself, apparently deeming it of little value. They preferred instead the title of Sayyid or Lord and later rulers were styled Sultan by Europeans. None of the Al Bu Said rulers of Muscat ever again became Imam. Muscat remained the centre of their world and their attention and energies were directed outward, to conquests in Africa and the Persian Gulf, and to commercial intercourse with Persia, India, Turkish Iraq, Africa and the Red Sea, and to the manipulation of the lucrative slave trade from their dependency of Zanzibar. The Imamate henceforth fell into desuetude whilst the Sultan was concerned wholly with the extension of his temporal power through trade, even annexing the principality of Gwadar on the Makran coast of Baluchistan.

This preoccupation of the Al Bu Said Sultans with maritime and external affairs deprived the inland tribes of a leadership which was sorely needed in the nineteenth century. From 1800 onwards inner Oman was periodically ravaged and held to ransom by the Wahhabis of Najd in Central Arabia, fanatical followers of a puritanical Muslim reformer Muhammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab. Regarding as apostates all who did not conform to their own vigorous and austere practice of Islam, the Wahhabis found in the schismatic Ibadiyah of Oman targets for their intolerance. Oman was fortuitously saved on several occasions from complete subjugation and at one stage the British Government in India intervened, concerned that the maritime states of Arabia should not succumb to Wahhabi rule and their resources be diverted to piratical ends. As a consequence

the Wahhabis or Saudis never took Muscat, though from their base in the Buraimi Oasis they held inner Oman in thrall for long periods throughout the century.

During this time the tribes sought to elect an Imam to govern them and succeeded in 1868 when a member of a collateral branch of the Al Bu Saïd overthrew the reigning Sultan at Muscat and was elected Imam. The election was chiefly the work of the Mutawwa or religious extremists among the Ibadi tribes, and supported by the paramount Sheikhs of Central Oman who continued to play a major role in politics today.

The Imam realized that Oman could never be strong until the authority of the central government was re-established over the tribes of the interior. His reign was brief though he expelled the Saudis from Buraimi and after his assassination in 1871 the reigns of government reverted to the Al Bu Saïd line through Sultan Turk Ibn Saïd, though he never aspired to be Imam nor would the Mutawwa have accepted him.

By the close of the 19th century the power of the Al Bu Saïd was in decline: a series of treaties with Britain in 1822, 1839, and 1845 had brought a consequent loss of revenue from slaves. Muscat's share of Persian Gulf trade had dwindled in competition with the European vessels and opportunities for conquest had vanished as the British Government brought the smaller states of the Gulf under maritime peace.

Within Oman the power of the Sultan was narrowly circumscribed. The Al Bu Saïd had alienated themselves from the Ibadi tribes of the

interior and especially from the Mutawa elements who considered the family not only as lax in their observance of Ibadi precepts but also as contaminated by too frequent intermarriage with African, Abyssinian and Baluch stock. Repugnant also was the tolerance accorded at Muscat to the followers of other religions, notably Hindus, and cause for further offence was found in the Al Bu Said's long association with foreign governments, foreign trade and foreign ways. Particularly irritating to these zealots was the suppression of the slave trade and the ammunition traffic at Muscat, the insistence of the British government and with the compliance, albeit unwilling, of successive Sultans. The tribes' resentment found active expression in attacks on Muscat but they were either turned back by the presence of British warships or bought off by the Sultan.

Throughout this time, in Dhofar, prevailed "the good old rule, the simple plan, that he shall take who has the power and he shall keep who can". The tribes, driven by poverty, lapsed into a subsistence economy and took to increased inter-tribal raiding and massive emigration. Then, as now, if the Sultan's writ ran strongly along the coast, in the mountains it was a doubtful and variable quantity. A more significant manifestation of the tribes' discontent was the growing agitation for the revival of the Imamate. The election of an Imam was supported by both Hinawi and Chafiri factions which served as a temporary healing of their breach. In fact the Imam was a mere figure-head in the struggle to be waged for ultimate power in Oman.

Sultan Taimur in 1913 inherited both the indebtedness of his father and the legacy of an open rebellion among the tribes of the interior. He tried to come to terms with the leaders of the revolt,

but in vain. An attack by the Imam's forces on Muscat in 1915 was only beaten off with the aid of Anglo-Indian troops. The rebellion had assumed something of the character of a Jihad and Sultan Taimur was advised to seek an accommodation with the rebels. The Imamate tribes resented the curtailment of the traffic in arms and slaves, the laxity of the Sultan in applying Sharia Law in his administration of justice, his reliance on British support, his tolerance of the importation of liquor and tobacco and above all, his action in cutting off the normal flow of imports to the interior. Agreement was reached in 1920 between the Sultan and the dissidents providing for peace between the inland tribes and the Sultan, free movement of persons between the interior and the coastal region, and the non-interference of the Sultan in tribal affairs. Thus the Imam exercised his spiritual authority over the tribes and the writ of the government in Muscat did not run into the interior.

Over the next twenty years little occurred to disturb the political life of Muscat and Oman. Following the Second World War, however, the politics of inner Oman were to become of international interest with the prospecting for oil throughout the Arab world. Concessions were granted for petroleum companies to prospect beyond the Hajar Mountains. The potential of the area led the Saudis to occupy Buraimi Oasis once again in 1952. Avoiding at first demands for force to be used the British Government acted on behalf of the Sultan and after two years of intractable negotiation the British and Sultanate forces reoccupied it. These oil developments also attracted the attention of the Imam who proclaimed that any concession made to the oil companies in the interior of Oman was invalid as it had been granted by the Sultan without his knowledge. Any nucleus of revolt was nipped in the bud, however, when Sultan Taimur used his expedition to Buraimi to deal with the

discontent a show of force through the interior, after which the Imam fled to his home village and there allowed to remain in peace. Not so his brother Talib, however, who had with Egyptian collaboration been conducting a sustained campaign to invest the Imamate movement with significance, and to undermine Sultan Taimur's position. With Saudi aid, a liberation army was formed and the co-opting of the Imam lent a religious tinge to an essentially secular affair. Rebellion was raised and feeling himself incapable of dealing with the uprising the Sultan called upon the British Government for help. The request was acceded to and within three weeks the revolt was crushed although it was to take a further campaign - two years later in 1959 - to flush the rebel leaders from their mountain fortresses in Jedal Akhdar.

Before dealing with the present insurgent campaign in Dhofar, it would be well to examine the British connection with Oman which has manifested itself so patently on periods over the last century.

British political relations with Muscat date back to 1798 when the French expedition to Egypt aroused fears on the part of the British authorities in India that Muscat might be used by the French as a privateer base for attacks on British and Indian shipping or even as a staging point for an invasion of India. A treaty was therefore concluded with the reigning Sultan by which he promised to exclude the French from his dominions for the duration of the war. The close of the Napoleonic Wars in the East might well have resulted in the complete lapsing of British interest in Muscat had not events in Arabia and the Persian Gulf compelled the British authorities in India to view the fortunes of the Sultanate with concern. Large scale piracy broke out in the Gulf following the establishment of Wahhabi domination over the Arabian maritime tribes.

protectorate over Muscat and Oman, but the idea was ultimately rejected in London. Instead, an undertaking was obtained from the Sultan in 1891 'never to cede, to sell, to mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation, save to the British Government, the dominions of Muscat and Oman or any of their dependencies'.

While it became an accepted principle of British policy in Eastern Arabia to uphold the Sultan of Muscat against his enemies both within and without the borders of Oman, no specific or explicit obligation to do so was ever entered into by the British Government. On occasion in the past, they have refused, for reasons of a wider policy or because of the traditional reluctance to become committed militarily on the Arabian mainland, to aid a Sultan in difficulties. But there exists, nevertheless, a disposition on the part of the British Government to regard it as incumbent upon them to come to the Sultan's aid in times of serious trouble, both because of the friendship that has endured since 1798 and because of the sacrifices that the Al Bu Said have made in the past, particularly with respect to the slave trade, to meet British wishes. Until the First World War, British interests in the Persian Gulf and peripheral countries were predominantly maritime- the protection of seaborne commerce, the suppression of piracy and the slave trade, and the maritime defence of India on the north-west. There has been no representation of British power "on the ground" as there was in the Hadhramaut. There under the forward policy of Ingrams, a scheme for the pacification and development of the country was evolved. In a land of turbulence and blood feuds - as in Dhofar which adjoins the Hadhramaut, there were but puny forces to support any form of law and order. The power of the Royal Air Force had to be used sparingly and with great restraint in a country where we wished to penetrate as friends not as enemies. Pacification there depended

upon a supreme degree of persuasion and personal influence, and the network of inter-tribal truces established by Ingrams took the country from anarchy to progress.

In the Qara Mountains of Dhofar the people are composed of warlike and rival tribes who have always found law and order repulsive. They respect unfettered personal liberty more than life and glory in their hereditary disputes. The alternative, of an extraneously imposed authority has in the past been acceptable to them only by force, or else as the lesser evil after periods of exhaustion - and, as the lessons of one generation had to be relearned by the next, no dynasty has been able to entrench itself.

Nowadays, British interests are largely territorial, especially with respect to oil investments in the Gulf region which cannot be safeguarded by the policies and practices of former years. Nor can the Al Bu Said Sultans be upheld, as in the past, against their opponents in Oman on the Arabian Peninsula by the simple expedient of a naval demonstration. Intervention today must largely take the form of a political role and any military support, in the international climate, must not be seen as a direct involvement of one country in another's affairs. An agreement was concluded with the British Government and the Sultan in 1953 by which he was to receive material assistance and the help of regular British Army Officers in training his armed forces. The request for help in the present rebellion was acceded to for a variety of reasons: because the Al Bu Said were allies of more than 150 years standing, because the revolt had outgrown the character of a merely internal struggle; because the rulers of the other Gulf States were awaiting with anxiety the British reaction to the subversion of one of their number within his own country; and because Britain had a major economic

investment at stake in the oil-bearing principalities as well as a strategic interest in the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman.

Instability is the chief characteristic of any regime in tribal Arabia. It is inherent in the Arab genius and springs from the preponderating part played by personalities and the relative unimportance of the machinery of government. Where the strong personality is of the government or is well disposed to the government all will be well. Where stronger men are without, trouble lurks. The tribes owe their allegiance in theory to the Sultan, whose writ in fact extends as far as his forces are effective. Given the inaccessibility of the Jebel and the historical dissension between the peoples of the coast and the mountains, there are many tribesmen who scorn his authority, as indeed they do any beyond their own camp. It was under the misrule of Sultan Said Bin Timur that the seeds of the present rebellion in Dhofar provinces were sown and nurtured, through his inability to assess the forces of change rising in the Gulf. He was a reactionary and unenlightened ruler of the traditional school of Arab tyrants. Under his autocracy Oman was led into a state of increasing turbulence and eventually civil war. The petroleum development research teams were pumping oil in the 1950's to produce 10 years later the country's largest resource of foreign income with concessions granted to Shell, West German and American interests. Yet most Omanis were aware that the oil resources which by 1970 had built up to £56m per annum had not been utilised to bring about social changes and create facilities which would have been considered normal even in the Gulf states - reluctant to emerge from their medieval state. The opportunity existed for peaceful development since Britain had instigated the establishment of a development Department. This was specifically created to utilise the benefits of oil production for the betterment of Oman.

Its programme centred on agriculture, hospitals, education, roads and irrigation techniques, all of which remained largely feudal. None was noticeably carried out. Agriculture was still subsistence farming centred on the Salalah plain, despite the potential development of large areas of fertile soil. The only artificial irrigation outside the towns consisted of the antiquated 'qanat' system, most of which were in ruins.

The few hospitals began were built at a snail's pace and - in a country where trachoma and malnutrition are the twin evils of tribal society - the import of drugs and medicines was restricted. Education remained, with very few exceptions, either private, as in the case of the resident Indian population, or else mainly devoted to the study of the Koran. Many of the entrepreneurial classes left to trade in the more progressive Trucial States where their subsequent sophistication rendered many unwilling to commit themselves to return. The legal system of Oman is based entirely on the Ibadhi interpretation of Sharia with the final authority for appeals and reprieve resting with the Sultan - and as such reflected Bin Timur's conservative outlook on life.

It can be no cause for wonder under these circumstances that Oman and the Sultan should become the obvious target for the propaganda of the various popular front forces which sought to liberate territories still maintaining their imperialist links. With Saudi Arabia still contending for overlordship in the Buraimi area and only too happy to support anyone who might embarrass the Sultan in his own country, and revolutionary Egypt ardent for the cause of Arab nationalism even where the concept was unknown, Said Bin Timur was a dangerous anachronism whose persistent obstinacy in the face of political and social change in the Arab

world threatened the future stability of the whole region.

The first signs of trouble in Dhofar appeared in 1962 when those malcontents of Said Bin Timur's rule left for Saudi Arabia to gain support for a nationalist organization called the Dhofar Liberation Front. The hope was to take advantage of the outstanding dissension between Oman and the Saudis over Buraimi, the rancour over the diminution of Imamate authority under the Sultan, and the traditional enmity of the mountain tribes towards the ruling dynasty. Backing for this new nationalist group came from Moscow, always anxious to help at the expense of the West with elements of support found in Iraq, Kuwait and the Yemen Republic which had donned the communist mantle following Britain's departure. At its inception the movement was seen as the only effective means of ridding the country of a tyrannical ruler and consequently a measured amount of support was gained from those educated people who looked to more enlightened government for the progress of Oman. The first minor incidents occurred in the early 1960's when the nationalist faction began to make its voice heard through strikes and occasional acts of sabotage. There is every reason to believe that with wisdom and diplomacy the insurrection could have been aborted by a decisive act and sincere negotiation with the tribesmen for a greater apportion of the country's wealth to be directed to their needs and welfare. But this was not the style of Said and soon a more sinister element entered the fray.

The departure of the British from Aden allowed the entry of Chinese advisors to the South Yemen, and, along with the roads and public buildings they constructed they also chose to spread their own political creed to wherever fertile ground was to be found. Thus the Dhofar Liberation Front became infiltrated by Chinese

trained guerrillas gaining their education in the Yemen. The old style national movement of Muassilim Bin Nufal wilted in the face of the Maoist-Leninist dogma until it became purely a communist front dedicated to the overthrow of the British and their ~~forces~~ throughout Arabia. The Peoples Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arab Gulf (P.F.L.O.A.G.) as it was subsequently known, held its first conference in 1968 at which a strategy for the war was decided. Soon after, weapons arrived from China and the incidents escalated into open conflict between the Jebel tribes and the Sultan's forces. In earlier days before the communist takeover, many of the guerrilla chiefs were killed or captured, or merely resigned, but the inability or unwillingness of the Sultan to subdue the rebels with a two-pronged military and diplomatic offensive created a sociological climate throughout Dhofar which set the Army an impossible task. His reluctance to subdue the rebels by arming his Army with modern weapons to fight a counter-insurgency war or to win over the population to government support caused a stalemate in which revolutionary war flourished. Instead he reduced food supplies for the Jebeli population to starve them into submission and deprived them of medical supplies. For their part, the guerrillas consolidated control in the Jebel and set about exploiting poverty, social neglect and hostility to a detested rule to wage a Maoist indoctrination campaign. Sultan Said, oblivious or insouciant to the threat retired from public view after an assassination attempt and, within a year, such was the situation that any area without the physical presence of the Sultan's Army was under guerrilla control and mortar attacks were launched on Salalah itself.

The appearance of the "Little Red Book" in Arabic showed the rebellion as one which sought not merely to overthrow an unpopular but to change the entire social structure of the country. A few

thousand tribesmen rebelling against the Sultan may have seemed a small spark to ignite the whole of Arabia, but Oman was only the last example of these states' emergence from a medieval past and absolute autocracy. The area was one of grave social problems complicated and exacerbated by local disputes. Britain saw the need of her presence in the area as necessary to provide the time and space for rapid change and reform.

It was with these clear indications of the threat to the stability of the Persian Gulf that Britain engineered the coup in 1970 which replaced the exemitic Said with his son Qaboos - a protege of Sandhurst and 'au fait' with British thinking in the Gulf. The coup came at a time when Britain was committed by domestic resolutions to withdraw her forces 'de jure' from the Gulf and was an attempt to set up a modern and forceful government to counter the efforts of the propagandists and to curb the spread of rebellion. The immediate effect of the new Sultan's accession was to take away some support for P.P.L.O.A.G. locally, but it was too late to have any immediate influence on the course of events. In the Jebel tribesmen were either ignorant of the change, as it was impenetrable to government forces and the rebels did not choose to disclose it, or insouciant. Moreover, they had been led to believe that Sultan Said had been killed in the earlier assassination attempt and thus thought that Qaboos had been ruling since then anyway. They saw little to gain by changing sides despite the offer of a truce with its concomitant inducements (see annex A) for, as yet, there was no indication that a new Sultan would be any less oppressive than his dynastic predecessors. Their strength of position indicated that they had everything to gain as they controlled the entire Jebel whilst the government forces were tied to the coastal plain. The coup had little immediate restraint on the rush of rebellion and the

guerrillas awaited further supplies from China with which to force Salalah and the Sultan into submission.

The P.P.L.O.A.G. is controlled, trained and administered from the peoples Republic of South Yemen where it is given full support by the government which passes on both arms and political commissions to the rebels. The High Command of the liberation front consists of five sections: co-ordination (praesidium) political, military, economic and administrative, and is committed to extending the armed struggle to the rest of the Gulf. It stands on the extreme left of all Arab Front movements and regimes and believes that Nasserism and the Baathist movement are failing because they have failed to abandon nationalism for the class struggle. Militarily the guerrilla force is divided into four main geographical regions, each subdivided into "Firqats" of about 50 men each. In times of need these Firqats can call upon the militia force which each village creates for its own defence, and in some areas the militia are permanently called out. This is particularly so in the East where the main engagements have been fought. Many hardcore guerrillas are trained in China and N. Korea whilst others have served in the various mercenary armies of the Gulf or gained their expertise from the Trucial Qan Scouts before deserting. They are armed with the usual Chinese guerrilla arsenal of assault rifles (Simonov and Kalashnikov), medium mortars, and heavy machine guns which can be utilised in an anti-aircraft role. Their heaviest weapon is the 75mm rocket launcher which, with a range of 7,000 metres enables the rebels to bombard Salalah from the security of the jebel. A rather shaky radio net at Hauf connects all major units with the tactical command headquarters though important messages are sent by courier. Morale varies enormously and whilst most hardcore are brave, skilful and determined, the attitude of others can be unpredictable.

However, they are cruel and impose their will on the weaker members ruthlessly and many people who have argued have been executed. It is this fear of execution or of pressure being applied to families and relatives in rebel controlled areas which has kept many people from joining the government side in recent years. The gradual influx of defectors following the coup has been both a measure of the new Sultan's success and of discontent with the rigours of guerrilla life in the mountains. Reasons for defection vary between ideological disenchantment such as disagreement with communist anti-Islamic methods, to the more practical considerations, as news that the defector was due for execution anyway, or lack of food. Though a certain amount of food is obtainable on the jebel and some, despite government control of food-stuffs, gets through from the coastal towns, most, along with arms, ammunition and medical stores, comes by way of ship to Hauf and camel convoy thereafter. These convoys are prime targets for the government forces as the camels are, in addition, a source of food to the enemy. Nevertheless they cannot be killed indiscriminately since this would have a bad psychological effect on the "hearts and minds" campaign being waged simultaneous to the military one. Furthermore Omani soldiers on the government side are themselves reluctant to kill camels and careful thought has to be given as to which animals in which areas may be regarded as legitimate targets. This vulnerability coupled with the difficulty in crossing the rocky jebel in the monsoon season has led to increasing use being made of the Negd route, away from government observation.

Geography and climate are the guerrilla's greatest allies and the inaccessibility of the jebel permits them secure bases to train and resupply for their operations. The jebel itself rises to 3,000 feet with very steep escarpments along the coast and the Salalah plain. Terrain is very broken with numerous vast deep wadis and many caves

with a thick Kenya type scrub in the west. In the eastern areas the jebel flattens to produce a Salisbury Plain type of rolling grassland for a third of the 150 miles to the Yemen border. The monsoon, lasting from late May to October has the effect of halting air operations as mist envelops the jebel and the Regd, encouraging the rebels to operate in areas they would normally be disinclined to enter. It does however create resupply difficulties for both sides as movement can be made only with great difficulty. It is natural guerrilla terrain and the rebels have proved reluctant to emerge onto the flat Salah plain which contains 75% of the population and is firmly controlled by Government forces. P.F.L.O.A.G. tactics at first were to build up large guerrilla units in order to force the government to concentrate in larger formations. This would then leave extensive areas free for guerrilla activities, and vulnerable points open to attack. At the same time small scale operations were mounted to force the government into a defensive posture around vital installations. In this they succeeded.

Before 1970, Sultan Said's forces were numerically weak, suspicious of one another's loyalties, and badly armed. British aid was limited to a token support of the government and the Sultan himself had failed to appreciate the threat to his position. Troops were unwilling to enter the rebel strongholds, morale was low and Government Officials were occupied in defending their own positions rather than fighting a mutual enemy. Had P.F.L.O.A.G. realized their opportunities at that time it is conceivable that they could, by repeated attacks on the coastal settlements and on Salah, have caused the overthrow of the Sultan in their favour and brought the war to a conclusion. The coup however prevented any such action on their part. It also saw the reorganisation of the government forces to an extent that they would soon be in a position to take the

offensive.

British appraisal of the communist threat led to the creation of a new Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) trained and advised by a British Army Training Team (BATT) and new larger, regiments were formed, equipped with modern weapons and commanded by British Officers, with contract officers recruited from Pakistan, Iran and Jordan. To enable the Army to relinquish its man consuming tasks of guarding vital points, a Dhofar Gendarmerie was created. This also adopted a normal policing role and had its own intelligence service. The fighter aircraft of the Sultan's Air Force were placed, in a large scale administrative reorganisation, under command of the Army for closer cooperation in the field, and the entire chain of command refashioned on the British model. Thus the conduct of the war, though ultimately resting in the hands of Qaboos, became generally conducted by those officers, loaned to Oman by the Ministry of Defence, whose own decisions were subject to Whitehall's control.

One of the results of Qaboos' accession was to produce a thin trickle of deserters from the rebel camp, and these provided a valuable source of information to the embryonic intelligence organisation, enabling the first real assessment of the guerrilla forces to be made. More important as a token of support for the new government was an abortive attempt by the townspeople of Taqa, in the rebel held area, to overthrow guerrilla control and return to their traditional life: a state in continuous disruption due to the exigencies of the war. The hiatus which followed the coup enabled SAF to train for the offensive and a number of small scale actions in response to enemy activity enabled it to find its feet quickly. The relative inaction, however, also allowed the rebels to resupply and reorganise their forces virtually unhindered. Hitherto, the guerrillas in

their campaign, had avoided direct confrontation with large government forces, preferring to engage them at long range, or in ambush on the canalised routes into the jebel. 1971 was to see a new phase as it became virtually a conventional war with the rebels attempting to hold territory in the face of government attack and in defiance of orthodox guerrilla thought. With increased confidence due to its reorganisation, the Sultan's army now began to move into the rebel held jebel around Salalah in Company size (100) strength, generally during the night. Here they would establish a defensive position and await the enemy reaction at first light. This would normally take the form of the wailing of women to alert the local militia who, in turn would fire single shots into the air to warn the nearest firqat. The militia would harass the SAF position by sniping fire in an effort to establish its strength, location and weapons whilst the firqat moved into position with its 50-60 men and heavy weapons. The aim of these operations was to force the enemy to fight at SAF's bidding in the belief that with superiority of weapons and air strikes they would always inflict more casualties than would be taken and eventually wear the guerrillas down. The nature of the terrain and logistical problems prevented SAF from remaining in position longer than two or three days at a time but the operations achieved their aim in disrupting enemy organisation and establishing the threat throughout the jebel of efficient government action. Coupled with military activity a civil action campaign was rigorously mounted to seduce the tribesmen away from rebellion which, it was recognised, force of arms alone could not achieve. Travel restrictions were eased and a new programme of land development initiated as forecast on Sultan Qaboos' accession. Following these came the first signs of the people fighting their own war against the guerrillas when the town of Sudh proclaimed its allegiance to the Sultan and overthrew rebel suzerainty: - a dramatic finale to the year's campaign and

a serious blow to P.F.L.O.A.C. which, badly hit by the government's offensive, hastily convened a committee meeting where a new strategy was sought.

Under cover of the Khareef mists two new weapons were added to the Sultan's arsenal. Firstly, in answer to the guerrilla tactics of the enemy, an irregular force was founded. This was composed mainly of enemy defectors with a stiffening of SAF and British advisors and operated in firqats of 200 men each, usually in tribal groups and in their own tribal area. Their tasks were not to operate independently and covertly, as did similar pseudo gangs during the Mau Mau confrontation in Kenya, but in conjunction with the regular forces. Specifically, their characteristics made them most suitable for reconnaissance, interdiction of enemy supply routes, ambush, and the raising and leading of tribes against the guerrilla hardcore. Operations however had to be tempered to the intricacies of Arab thought, tending to be a series of compromises. To the tribesmen national loyalties mean nothing and tribal affairs are as far as he is able to see. Motivation for joining a firqat is mostly political or financial in nature - a desire for control of the individual's tribal area and gains in cash, food, land or livestock. Living almost tribally the firqats carry in their wake both animals and womenfolk - except when on specific operations - and will often disappear to tend to their own problems. Properly advised though the firqats work well and once the Dhofari way of life is understood are capable of contributing much to aid the regular forces.

The second weapon was the helicopter, the advent of which may well prove decisive in the present conflict. Though not fitted for an offensive role the helicopter gives SAF a tremendous psychological advantage in that they may land on the Jebel at will, and unknown to the enemy. Furthermore, since it is impossible to

tell the load a helicopter is carrying they can be used for deception purposes and keep the guerrillas guessing as to their intent. Their use in casualty evacuation is a morale boost to the SAF soldier who knows that if wounded he will be in an operating theatre in the fastest time possible.

It was with these advantages that the decision was taken in 1972 to mount an enterprising expedition to clear the Eastern region of rebels. This area was not chosen at random for it already possessed certain qualifications suitable to the government purpose. The undulating nature of the terrain favoured easier movement and resupply whilst it was at the extreme end of the guerrilla chain of command. Two out of every three defectors came from the area and the earlier attempt at counter revolution had originated in the district town of Taqa. It was in addition, the birthplace of the Sultan's mother and latently loyalist in sympathy. These factors had enabled the firqate to thoroughly infiltrate the area and secure a firm base for the SAF troops who then arrived in unprecedented strength. The decision to mount such a large scale operation in a rebel area was firm evidence of the government's resolve to defeat the guerrillas and remove the threat to the development of Oman. The intention was to drive the rebels from this relatively flat part of the jebel and inflict sufficient damage on them to curtail their activities. This would enable the government to consolidate its position in the territory, give it a forward base for further operations and deny resources of both man and food to P.F.L.O.A.G. In all of this it succeeded. The rebels reacted to the government presence by a series of conventional attacks. These inevitably sapped guerrilla strength and morale as heavy casualties were inflicted upon them by the superior fire power. The ferocity of such engagements diminished to the point where the rebels no longer

had the capacity such action and were forced to resort to more orthodox guerrilla tactics. The operation left them broken into small groups with their ability to mount even simple operations several, restricted. The SAF remained on the jebel where a permanent garrison was built for surveillance and control of the area. Though damaged, however, the rebels - still with the support of sections of the population. Moreover the tribes did not rise in support of the Sultan as was hoped - though they may be as yet unwilling to pronounce their loyalties without firm evidence of the government's ability to defeat the rebels - and though the government control the tops of the jebel, the deep, scrub filled wadis are still in the hands of the guerrillas, as is the population within. Their removal will necessitate a long process of "weeding out" by the firqat in conjunction with further operations elsewhere. Ancillary operations have already begun and are devoted to the blocking of the rebel supply line in the west with the intention of starving out those recidivists in the centre. Here pacification operations suffer from adverse terrain and a hostile population. A policy of enforced settlement of tribes in protected areas also denies both food and men to the guerrillas to an extent that P.F.L.O.A.G.'s capacity for offensive operations has been severely blunted. It is from the social and political side that any government coup de grace must eventually appear.

Until recently the Sultan's Armed Forces were in complete control of the civilian administration as only they had the requisite system of command, communications and technical advisors. Even now the Sultan is largely dependent upon his military advisors for many aspects of government whilst the security measures incumbent upon a state at war are maintained. However the move has already been made away from the feudalism of Said by the raising of a small civil service

responsible for police matters, development, education, agriculture and industry. A Wali, or Governor, is the Sultan's representative in Dhofar and, with a series of Naib Walis in the coastal towns and eastern area, is responsible for all aspects of life in the province. These include the control of a large force of Home Guards known as Askare, the medical services and government controlled shops where locals can buy food, clothing and other necessities. These latter were developed to prevent aid freely reaching the guerrillas.

In the symbiosis which exists between townspeople and Jebali, firewood, essential to the life of the towns is brought down onto the plain in exchange for food. These visits also provide the government forces with a valuable source of information on the rebels and their cessation would be both impractical and undesirable. The requirement to trade at government shops allows only limited quantities of food to be taken away in exchange and perhaps reach the guerrilla forces. Government medical centres too have been strategically sited to ensure a consistent contact with the nomadic jebali and induce his support in the Sultanate. In the towns house plots have been set aside for those who choose to become sedentary and enjoy the fruits of development and better government. To those in the jebel unaware of change a carefully controlled Radio Salalah disseminates information. It is less powerful than Radio Aden on which P.F.L.O.A.C. broadcasts daily but enjoys one major advantage in its speed of reporting. News of government successes and setbacks can be broadcast well before Radio Aden whose reaction time is three to seven days. Local people are thus able to hear the truth almost at once which considerably lessens the impact of P.F.L.O.A.C. broadcasts. The lack of power of the Salalah transmitter is countered by the dropping of numerous information leaflets throughout the jebel. These describe government policy and hold periodic offers of amnesty or rewards to those who bring in their weapons.

Al Watan the official Oman Weekly newspaper is instrumental to this effect within government controlled areas.

Prior to 1970 Oman was completely isolated from the main stream of educational, social and economic developments in the Arab world. With the accession of qaboos, the revenue from increased oil supplies, and the help of foreign experts, a major development programme is being put into action in all these fields. A high priority is a project which recognizes Oman's strategic location and which should permit Omanis to regain their dominant position as the traders of South East Arabia - the development of a new harbour capable of handling the largest freighters operating in the Gulf area and the Indian Ocean. This project at Matram with all the adjacent works necessary in such a complex offers jobs and wages to those tribesmen who can be induced to leave the jebel in return for the prospect of material comforts such an income would offer. A project similar in concept is the SEEB International Airport, already receiving daily international flights and with the capacity to receive the largest aircraft. Though technical expertise and overall supervision is provided by foreign companies under contract, such works again need a large supply of local labour and the need for concomitant service industries in both these projects has been met by the entrepreneurial classes. The beginning of a new and modern road network will eventually link the coast to the interior and join Oman with its neighbours in the Union of Arab Emirates. This will go a long way to solving the problem of poor communications which has in the past played an important part in the isolation and fragmentation of society in Oman. In agriculture, a five year plan is afoot, for Oman's oil reserves are not limitless and the country will need to look increasingly to agriculture to sustain its prosperity when these reserves are exhausted. High on the list of priorities is a

comprehensive water resources and hydrological survey. Much land cultivated in past centuries has been allowed to fall into disuse and land classification and usage survey is also under way. The whole of this programme is being implemented with guidance from the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations. Oman's other great natural resource is the sea, and specialists have been engaged to investigate the potential of this wealth for the future. The establishment of a Ministry of Health had been one of Sultan Qaboos' first tasks and to this end an extensive building programme has been launched to provide sorely needed hospitals and health centres in the towns and rural areas. All medical care and treatment is free and a start has been made on the implementation of preventive medicine. Education too has undergone a rapid expansion from the old Koranic system and is suited to the needs of the country with mobile training centres for rural areas, special youth schools, a teacher training institute, secondary schools and the expansion of existing trade schools. Special efforts have been made by the Government to develop Dhofar. In addition to schools and hospitals in Salalah, Marbat and Taqa on the plain, some 50 kilometres of modern roads are under construction, though not yet to the Jebel. A small modern port is being built at Raysut and an attempt made to re-establish agriculture and the pastoral wealth of the province.

These are the measures to date which the Sultan has taken to bring the war to a close. Its continuation shackles Oman to a feudal past when the other Gulf states surge forward to increasing prosperity. Militarily the guerrillas cannot be defeated whilst they retain the will to fight. This they show every sign of maintaining despite their present exhaustion. The inaccessible regions of Central and Western Dhofar are under their control and both history and time

would appear to favour their continued independence. This independence of the Jebel from Central government has been a trait of Oman's history whether that government be Ibadi, Imamate or Sultanate. At present the war costs almost £26m of a £50m gross national income. The expenditure cannot be sustained indefinitely if Oman as a whole is to achieve the desired rate of development to bring it on par with the Union of Arab Emirates. Sultan Qaboos may feel strongly tempted to write off the barrenness of the Jebel in favour of a more rapid progress throughout the rest of the country. This he might attempt by granting some degree of autonomy to the rebel-held Jebel. It seems unlikely though that P.L.O.A.G.'s demands would be appeased by such a nominal gesture. And their ideology forbids any recognition of a separate enclave on Oman's border for it would verify fears of an Arabian "domino" theory. For the hard-core guerrillas in the mountain fastness of Jebel Dhofar the present insurrection is but a new interpretation of an age old way of life. It can only be eradicated, if ever, by a campaign of infinite duration and expense. The greatest hope for stability would appear to be the development of Oman's petroleum resources and the subsequent creation of industry. This may prompt the tribesmen to leave the Jebel in return for the material comforts such income would offer. Furthermore the capacity to meet material demands makes it possible to create a public with a stake in the existing system. This is the hope and expectation in Dhofar.

ANNEX A

STATEMENT BY JALALAT AS SULTAN

BROADCAST OVER RADIO OMAN 1930 HOURS SUNDAY 9 AUGUST 1970

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

Radio Oman

1. This facility will be used for future talks by Jalalat as Sultan, or by a senior member of the Government.

Government

2. Sayid Tariq Bin Taimur has been appointed Prime Minister. He and Sayid Faher will be leaving the country for a short time to arrange their private affairs.
3. The Government is to be formed of Omanis supplemented in the short term by expatriates where necessary. Education of the people is to begin as quickly as possible.

Nation

4. The country is to be known from now as the Sultanate of Oman.
5. A new flag is being considered.
6. The people are exhorted to "Stand together before God: be loyal, diligent and industrious and reject the Godless creed of Communism".

Exiles

7. Those who had been disloyal to Sultan Said Bin Taimur are forgiven. Steps are to be taken at once to investigate the return of Omani citizenship to those who have lost it.
8. An information office is to be opened for Omanis in the Gulf in a place yet to be determined.

Land Development

9. Bait al Falaj. HQ SAF, Arms and Services are to be moved in a 3 year plan to the junction of the Batinah and Mizwa roads. Bait al Falaj valley will become an extension of Matzah and the people required to live there will be better housed. Roads, water and sewage

schemes will be provided.

10. Azaiba is to become the first civil airport, and its facilities will be shared by SOAF.

Restrictions Lifted

12. General. Omani citizens and their families are now free to travel inside and outside the country by day and by night without restrictions except:

- a. Normal passport requirements.
- b. Specific restrictions imposed from time to time for security reasons.
- c. Vehicle movement between Sur and Ja'alan continues to be illegal.
- d. The existing controls and regulations in the Buraimi area and across the frontier there remain in force until a Customs organisation is established.

13. Muscat. Lanterns need no longer be carried at night.

14. Agricultural Machinery may be imported and owned freely. The farms at Sohar and Mizwa are to be reactivated as quickly as possible.

Plans for the future

15. Agricultural. A farm is to be started at Salalah.

16. Water. There is to be survey of the water resources of the Salalah plain, and in turn an irrigation plan. Equipment is to be hired immediately for well drilling in certain parts of the whole country, and a complete survey of the water resources undertaken.

17. Harbour for Dhofar. A small harbour is to be built as quickly as possible.

18. Customs Duty. The recent changes will encourage trade and cause the reduction of prices of all goods throughout the Sultanate.

19. Zakat. The system of collection is to be reviewed.

20. Tribal Shiikh are to receive a stipend. This is to be considered by the government at once.

21. Civil Servants' Salaries. The salaries paid to all civilians employed by the Sultanate are to be reviewed.

22. Social. The health service is to be improved immediately, and there is to be an urgent review of plans for education.
23. Civil Engineering. The surveys of the NIZWA and SOHAR roads are to continue. The Muttrah harbour project is to be expanded.
24. Communications. There is to be a country-wide network of telecommunications.
25. Public Transport will be provided as soon as possible.
26. Vehicle Regulations. The grant of vehicle licenses will be controlled in the short term. From 1st Rajab (approx. 3rd September) applications for vehicle licenses are to be processed through Walah to the Vehicle Licensing Section of the Police Authority. There will be a Vehicle Inspectorate and the Road Traffic Police organization will be expanded.
27. Radio and Television requirements are to be surveyed.
28. Muscat Power Company is to be nationalised.

Conclusion

29. The government and the people must stand together.
30. Messages of greeting and goodwill have been received in particular from HM King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, HM King Hussein of Jordan and the rulers of the Arabian Gulf.
32. Message of self-dedication.

ANNEX B

SYNOPSIS OF REVOLUTIONARY WAR TACTICS CONCEIVED BY

MAO TSE TUNG

1. "Those that know the enemy as well as they know themselves are never defeated".

MAO TSE TUNG

2. Read and remember the following of Mao's thoughts:
 - a. Extreme prudence in planning operations - extreme daring in carrying them out.
 - b. Avoid strength - Strike at weakness.
 - c. Surprise - the thunderclap leaves not time to cover the ears.
 - d. Cause uproar in the East - strike in the West.
 - e. Numbers alone confer no advantage.
 - f. Deliberate in council - prompt in action.
 - g. By feigning defeat - lure the enemy into ambush.
 - h. To gain territory is no cause for joy; to lose territory is no cause for sorrow.
 - j. To hold territory and bases is to sacrifice strength.
 - k. When the enemy is numerous and well armed - avoid direct clashes.
 - l. We must work to a policy of harassment and obstruction.
 - m. Guerrillas are like fish in the river - they must be free to swim in any direction at a moment's notice.
 - n. Guerrilla strategy is to tie up ten of the enemy soldiers with one of yours - tactics is to fight one of the enemy with ten of yours.
 - o. The people are the river, the guerrilla the fish, therefore we must not be separated or we cannot exist.
 - p. Avoid the solid - attack the hollow.
 - q. Guerrilla hostilities are the universality of war.
 - r. Minor successes in hit and run tactics are invaluable - we must be seen to be winning.