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R E P O R T N O . 13

DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY

CANADIAN FORCES HEADQUARTERS

Table of Contents

CONTENTS	PARAGRAPHS	PAGE
Purpose and Services Used	1	1
The Dispute	2 - 3	1
United Nations Interest	4 - 8	2
United Nations Planning	9 - 13	5
Approval for the Mission	14 - 18	8
R.C.A.F. Planning	19 - 20	10
Advance and Main Party to Yemen	21 - 25	11
Helicopters	26 - 27	14
During Formation	28 - 30	15
Implementation of UNYOM and First Mandate	31 - 36	17
Additional Otters	37	21
Second Mandate	38 - 43	22
Third Mandate	44 - 49	24
The New Year	50 - 62	28
R.C.A.F. Consideration for the Future	63 - 65	32
In Retrospect	66 - 69	34

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R E P O R T NO. 13
DIRECTORATE OF HISTORY
CANADIAN FORCES HEADQUARTERS

19 December 1966

Canada and Peace-keeping Operations
Yemen - U.N.Y.C.M.

Purpose and Sources Used

1. The purpose of this report is to record the Canadian contribution to the United Nations Yemen Observer Mission (UNYOM) in the Yemen from 4 July 1963 to 4 September 1964. The United Nations supplied an "umbrella" under which it was intended the United Arab Republic and Saudi Arabia would cease military confrontation in the Yemen and would commence political discussions leading to a solution of their differences. The sources used in the compilation of this report include open publications and departmental headquarters files. The only papers of the Secretary of State for External Affairs that have been utilized are those appearing on the departmental files.

The Dispute

2. Two of the monarchist governments that remained in the eastern Arab world, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, were involved in 1962 in a rift with Egypt, which was under the rule of President Nasser. Nasser's policy included an intensive radio propaganda campaign against both Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

.../2

3. Yemen, the most backward of the Arab monarchist states, was racked by rebellion on 17 September 1962. The rebel leader, Colonel Abdullah al-Salal, overthrew the monarchy of the Imam Mohammed al Badr and became president of the new republic. Nasser promptly recognized the Yemen Arab Republic. By the end of December 1962 the new republic was recognized by the United Nations and the United States of America. The revolutionary government controlled the cities and towns in the centre, the south and on the western sea coast, but the Yemeni tribesmen, who were intensely royalist, or anti-Salal, still resisted the new regime and controlled the north-west and north-east mountains and the deserts of the east. In order to contain the republican holdings and possibly overthrow Salal's government, Saudi Arabia was supporting the Yemeni tribesmen by the shipment of arms and other military supplies. Nasser's United Arab Republic (U.A.R.) sent arms, military personnel and supplies to consolidate the Salal regime.¹

United Nations Interest

4. In early 1963 U Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, became disturbed about the situation in Yemen and the external forces at work. The intervention of Saudi Arabia and the U.A.R. constituted a threat to the peace of the entire area. U Thant consulted with the representatives of the U.A.R., Yemen and Saudi Arabia and with their approval sent Ralph Bunche, the United Nations Under-secretary, to Yemen and the U.A.R. on a fact-finding mission in February and March 1963. Bunche was given authority to proceed to Saudi Arabia if he considered it

SECRET

- 3 -

necessary. The government of the U.S.A. sent Ellsworth Bunker, a retired U.S. diplomat, who had contributed to the solution of the problems in New West Guinea (West Irian), to Saudi Arabia on a "somewhat similar but unconnected mission".² Both Bunche and Bunker reported to the Secretary-General. As a result of the talks that they had with the heads of state of Yemen, U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia, agreement was reached on the terms of a disengagement.

5. U Thant reported to the Security Council on 29 April 1963 that each of the three governments confirmed "their acceptance of identical terms of disengagement in Yemen".³ This agreement was to terminate all support and aid from Saudi Arabia to the royalist forces in Yemen and to deny the use of Saudi Arabian territory to the royalist leaders; the U.A.R. undertook to begin a phased withdrawal of its troops from Yemen. During the withdrawal phase U.A.R. troops were to be held at their bases and were not to take part in field activities. In addition to the specific commitments of the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia it was agreed that a demilitarized zone would be established 20 kilometres on each side of the Yemen-Saudi Arabian border, and impartial observers would be stationed in this demilitarized zone to check on the observance of the terms of disengagement. The observers were to have authority to travel beyond the limits of the demilitarized zone to certify the actions of Saudi Arabia and the U.A.R. in conformance with the cessation of support and the troop withdrawals respectively.⁴

.../4

SECRET

6. At the end of April Major-General Carl Von Horn, Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization (UNTSC) in Jerusalem, was selected to proceed to the Yemen area for consultation and consideration of the size of the group that would be needed to fulfill the projected United Nations role. In this reconnaissance and planning mission General Von Horn was accompanied by a Canadian Army officer, Major E.R. Sharpe.⁵ However the Permanent Mission in New York was asked to inform the U.N. Secretariat that approval, given by the Canadian government, for Major Sharpe to accompany General Von Horn did not imply approval of Canadian participation in Yemen operations. Such further approval would only be given after consideration by the Canadian government of a formal request from the Secretary-General.⁶

7. The Secretary-General reported to the Security Council that in his preliminary assessment a requirement existed for "not more than fifty observers" and that they "will be needed for three or four months, at the most". He also considered that for transportation and patrol purposes three or four helicopters, and the same number of aircraft of the Otter type, and some jeeps and lorries "should suffice".⁷

8. On 3 May 1963 the Department of External Affairs advised Air Chief Marshall F.R. Miller, Chairman, Chiefs of Staff (C.C.C.S.), that Canada should anticipate being asked to supply Otter aircraft, with officers and crew, for the Yemen operation. He suggested that preliminary studies

SECRET

- 5 -

be made to ascertain the number of air and ground crew required and the time it would take to convey the aircraft and personnel to Yemen.⁸ Air Force Headquarters (A.F.H.Q.) responded by seeking advice from **the** Chief Of Operations (C.Ops.), the Air Member for Technical Services and from Air Transport Command (A.T.C.).⁹

United Nations Planning

9. By 2 May 1963 General Von Horn arrived in Cairo to begin the formulation of his plans and the U.A.R. press announced that the "vanguard of the U.A.R. troops in Yemen is enroute back to Suez".¹⁰ This announcement was encouraging and undoubtedly created an optimistic atmosphere.

10. Von Horn had completed his initial consultations by the end of May and reported to the Secretary-General. U Thant presented a Second Report to the United Nations on 27 May 1963.¹¹ This report was commented upon by the Permanent Mission in New York (PERMISNY). The Secretary-General had stated that he had made a decision to dispatch observers with the "least possible delay" and that the mission was not to exceed two hundred men, including a ground patrol unit of one hundred men and the necessary air crews and supporting units. On the basis of an "uninterrupted application of agreement between U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia", the duration of the Yemen operation was estimated at four months, but the way was left open for a lengthier stay. In addition to these statements by U Thant, the discussions revealed that the Secretary-General had been urged by the

.../6

SECRET

SECRET

- 6 -

U.S.A. to act speedily "to prevent deterioration of situation in Yemen". U.A.R. willingness to pay half the cost of the mission was discussed and the constitutional authority of the Secretary-General was questioned.¹² A precis of the constitutional position of the Secretary-General's political authority to establish a peace-keeping operation had been made by the Department of External Affairs. It recommended that some organ of the United Nations - either the Security Council or the General Assembly - should at least concur with the U.N. "presence" in Yemen.¹³ However, the U.S.S.R. called for a Security Council meeting to approve the Secretary-General's plans to send the observer group to Yemen and insisted that the Council considerations be concluded by the passing of a resolution.¹⁴ The Security Council did not meet on this subject until 10 June 1963.

11. In the Secretary-General's Second Report General Von Horn was named the Head of the Mission and an outline of the tasks of the mission, as foreseen at that time, was given. Immediately following the report, U Thant instructed the Indian General I.J. Rikhye, Military Adviser of the Secretary General, to obtain the informal reaction of the Canadian Government to supplying an air unit to operate and maintain three Otters, three H19 helicopters and two Caribous for the Yemen mission. The Otters and helicopters were to be supplied from the United Nations force in the Congo (UNOC) and the Caribous from the R.C.A.F. unit at Gaza. The main base of the air unit was to be El Arish with an advance base at Al Hudaida. Sanaa was proposed as the headquarters of the Yemen operation and a Canadian Air

.../7

SECRET

Adviser was to be stationed there.¹⁵ The R.C.A.F. informed the Minister of National Defence that there were no RCAF pilots currently trained in flying H19 helicopters and estimated the cost of the operation for the first year at \$836,000, involving a manpower total of 77, not including¹⁶ the helicopter requirement.

12. General Von Horn's plan - on which the Secretary-General had based his request to Canada - envisaged the U.N. presence as being "primarily symbolic" and requiring the surveillance of critical areas of the border by light fixed-wing aircraft and the surveillance of the communications network in Yemen by armoured car squadrons and fixed observer sites. Teams of observers would be stationed at key communication centres and ports of entry.¹⁷ Von Horn's planning staff was augmented by the transfer of Canadians,¹⁸ Major E.J. Amirault and Major H.A. McLellan, from UNTSO.

13. As the Secretary-General intended to send an advance party to Yemen as soon as the Security Council¹⁹ approved the U.N. presence in Yemen, some arrangements were made in advance. Major A.V. Hortie was assigned to the advance party²⁰ and Canada was requested to allow General Von Horn the use of one Caribou for the transportation and support of this advance party.²¹ The use of this Caribou was approved, but it was again stipulated that this would not prejudice the decision that Canada would make if it was officially requested to participate. In approving the request for the Caribou, Canada considered it an opportunity to assess the soundness of the complete²² unit. Wing Commander S. Olsen, Air Liaison Officer of

the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF), was utilized²³ as Air Observer during the initial Yemen planning period. As it was considered that the Caribou for the advance party would become fully committed, General Von Horn requested that an Otter with flying and maintenance crew²⁴ be based at Sanaa for his personal use. The U.N. Secretariat also asked that Captain R. Thorne, R.C.C.C., be detached from UNEF to become the Logistics Officer,²⁵ Yemen. The United Nations Yemen Observer Mission (UNYOM) had still not received official status.

Approval for the Mission

14. The Security Council convened briefly on 10 June 1963 to hear a statement by the Secretary-General. He announced that there would be no cost to the United Nations for the mission in Yemen since the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia had agreed to cover the costs for a period²⁶ of two months. The meeting for consideration of U.N. participation in Yemen was scheduled for the following day.

15. Canadian officials in Cairo reported that neither protagonist was adhering to the terms of the disengagement agreement and that the U.A.R. had returned the exact number of troops that had been rotated out. The observer team, when established, could only be considered a symbolic presence and provide a face-saving device to allow the Saudis and the Egyptians to withdraw.²⁷

16. The Security Council met on 11 June 1963 and passed a resolution authorizing the Secretary-General to establish the observer mission in Yemen. The Secretary-

SECRET

- 9 -

General spoke in support of the resolution, and stressed that refusal or delay was not in the interests of the Middle East or the U.N. After approval of the resolution, it was decided that the advance party should leave for the Yemen on 12 June 1963.²⁸

17. On 13 June 1963 the Canadian Cabinet confirmed the Canadian contribution on a continuing basis. This meant that two officers of UNTSO were to be posted to the Yemen planning staff at Bierut and one officer from UNTSO to the advance party in Yemen; and that one Caribou and one Otter, with air and maintenance crews, would be lent to the advance party. In response to a specific request from the Secretary-General, the Cabinet also agreed that one officer of the planning staff should proceed to Yemen with the advance party; that an R.C.C.C. officer with UNEF should be Logistics Officer, Yemen; that R.C.A.F. personnel be supplied for the operation and maintenance of an air unit of three Otters, in addition to the one being used by the advance staff, three H19 helicopters, and two Caribous, including the one being used by the advance party. The Cabinet also agreed to the provision of additional personnel and equipment, if they were requested by the United Nations and approved by the S.S.E.A. and the Minister of National Defence.²⁹ Although the Cabinet gave approval to man the three helicopters, the information passed to the Permanent Mission in New York left the provision of air and maintenance crews for the three helicopters open to further confirmation.³⁰

.../10

SECRET

18. Canadian approval for participation was valid for six months but the situation would be re-examined by the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of National Defence after four months.³¹ The Secretary-General had predicted a maximum duration of only four months and had thought that the operation "might possibly end in two months".³² The U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia had agreed to pay the costs for two months,³³ a fact which was to prove an embarrassment throughout the life of the mission, since future extensions by the paying nations were also limited to two-month periods.

R.C.A.F. Planning

19. Air Transport Command [A.T.C.] submitted a plan to Air Force Headquarters covering R.C.A.F. support of U.N. operations in Yemen.³⁴ This plan was based on an anticipated duration of six months and the requirement to replace the Caribous, which had been withdrawn from 115 A.T.U., El Arish, and assigned to Yemen, by "one or two Dakotas from either 1 Air Division or from Canada". The plan covered operations, logistics, administration, accounts and finance and proposed an R.C.A.F. staff of 14 officers and 42 other ranks plus an additional six other ranks to augment 115 A.T.U. if second line maintenance of the proposed Dakota was to be carried out at El Arish. It assumed the U.N. would provide the necessary messing and quartering but made special mention of the need to make the unit self-accounting, to issue passports to R.C.A.F. personnel and to determine, prior to their departure, the

special allowances to be paid to them. Eventually it became apparent that the messing and quartering supplied by the U.N. were inadequate and that the allowances were discriminatory.

20. The A.T.C. plan was discussed at Air Force Headquarters on 17 June 1963³⁵ and resulted in Organization Order 8.24 being drawn up. This order designated the unit as 134 A.T.U. and included the self-accounting proposal. On 18 June it was reported by the Permanent Mission New York that Group Captain H.W. Lupton and Squadron Leader A.I. Umback had held discussions with Dr. Bunche and General Rikhye at United Nations Headquarters on 17 June.³⁶ Group Captain Lupton presented a complete plan for R.C.A.F. participation in Yemen and supported his plan with a detailed brochure on the Yemen problem "including key areas, terrain conditions, water supply and so forth". The United Nations Secretariat was extremely impressed with the efficiency of R.C.A.F. pre-planning and a copy of the brochure was left with the U.N. Secretariat. It would seem probable that the A.T.C. plan submitted to A.F.H.Q. and the plan discussed at the U.N. were the same, since Group Captain Lupton and Squadron Leader Umback were at that time on the staff of A.T.C. Unfortunately, the copy of that plan which is now on file does not mention the interesting brochure considered so valuable by the U.N.

Advance and Main Party to Yemen

21. The Caribou and the Otter assigned to the advance party from 115 A.T.U. departed for Yemen from El Arish on 11 and 12 June respectively.³⁷ The Caribou went into

SECRET

- 12 -

immediate service and General Von Horn reported that it suffered light damage, but with no personnel injured, while enroute from Sada to Sanaa on 17 June 1963.³⁸ The U.N. Secretariat requested that R.C.A.F. personnel take side arms and ammunition when assigned to the Yemen area. However, only occupants of aircraft regularly carried side arms; ground crews wore them only when it was considered that their bases were threatened. This limitation had a two-fold purpose; it emphasized the peaceful nature of the U.N. mission and it lessened the temptation to attack U.N. personnel for the purpose of securing much-sought-after weapons.³⁹ During this period Cairo reported that "the military situation appears to have considerably deteriorated". The U.A.R. had bombed recalcitrant Yemeni villages and on 17 June "almost certainly used phosphorous bombs against Saudi towns".⁴⁰

22. The damage to the Caribou and the knowledge that the airstrips at Quizan and Najran had been bombed by U.A.R. aircraft on 15 June led to the fear that this operation would be different from any that Canada had undertaken in the past. The risk of casualties was greater. A firm agreement was needed that a cease-fire would exist in areas where aircraft were to be based and that missions would be planned to avoid exposure to ground fire.⁴¹ The fear of casualties was not confined to the Air Officer Commanding, A.T.C.; PERMISNY reported that a basic operational plan for UNYOM had been drawn up. In commenting on the basic plan, the Mission stated that the Secretariat was "investigating use of Aden for...treatment of possible casualties".⁴²

.../13

SECRET

23. By 18 June 1963 it had been decided that UNYCOM would be organized as follows:

- a. a headquarters at Sanaa for the mission and Von Horn's planning staff;
- b. a Yugoslavian unit from UNEF, comprising three troops and a headquarters section, to be dispersed with one troop at Najran, one at Sada and one at Quizan; (As there is no road connection between these points each troop was to act in isolation, using 5-cwt. cars to travel in its own area. The plan envisaged a total Yugoslavian contingent of 100 to 125.);
- c. six observers, with three at Sanaa and three at Al Hudaida;
- d. a headquarters for the air unit at Al Hudaida, with detachments at Quizan and Najran and helicopters to operate along the coast; and
- e. a major logistic base at Gaza.⁴³

24. The advance party of 134 A.T.U., comprising the Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader A.I. Umback, and four others, departed from Trenton on 18 June 1963 and arrived at Aden on 20 June. The main party, consisting of 40 all ranks, was prepared to leave Trenton 20 June but was held back until 22 June at the request of the United Nations due partly to the lack of confirmation of accommodation at Hudaida⁴⁴ and partly to the delay of the U.S.A.F. in transporting the Otters from UNOC.

25. The airlift of the main party from Canada to Aden was authorized by A.F.H.Q. to commence 22 June. This air-

lift was to be carried out by a Yukon aircraft to Pisa, then by C130 to Sanaa and Aden.⁴⁵ Arrangements had been made for Aden Airways to provide the necessary services to assemble the C130s when they arrived. The basic operational plan was changed and the main air base became Sanaa instead of Al Hudaida.

Helicopters

26. The R.C.A.F. had originally doubted the effectiveness of the H19 helicopters. The retraining of pilots and maintenance crew to provide properly equipped personnel was going ahead, but the R.C.A.F. considered it necessary to check the feasibility of using H19s provided from the Congo.⁴⁷ Air Transport Command sent a small technical team (one officer and three N.C.Os.) to the Congo to assess the airworthiness of the H19 helicopters on the UNOC inventory.⁴⁸ By 3 July the A/CAS was able to report that the R.C.N. (which operated a similar aircraft, the HO4S-3) had agreed to provide the necessary helicopter training for R.C.A.F. personnel. Three pilots and eight helicopter ground crew underwent training at H.M.C.S. Shearwater in preparation for the mission in Yemen. The air force, therefore, was able to accept the operation from a personnel standpoint.⁴⁹ The helicopters had been subjected to a cursory examination at the Congo and appeared to be technically sound, but the problem of spares' supply was not resolved. The suitability of the aircraft for the role envisaged was considered doubtful however, due to the "extreme climatic conditions and topographical features" of the area in which they would operate.⁵⁰

27. One H19 helicopter was transported from the Congo to Aden and a naval technician accompanied the R.C.A.F. contingent to Aden to help in its assembly.⁵¹ It was intended to carry out trials to verify the H19's ability to carry out the role for which it was proposed. Many delays were encountered in carrying out these trials; "H19 in Aden now serviceable after approximately 14 days unserviceable for voltage regulator".⁵² It was considered at that time - 18 August 1963 - that the operation of the H19 "may be feasible but will be marginal in some areas such as range and reserve fuel. Maintenance appears to present the greatest obstacle. On the concept of operating two A/C per day from an unsheltered, sandy, humid and salty area, elaborate GSE (Ground Support Equipment) will have to be flown in".⁵³ The final H19 trials were carried out on 28 and 29 August 1963, and they proved conclusively that the H19 was totally unsuitable. The helicopter was unable to execute a hover take-off with crew, plus one passenger, at temperatures which would normally be encountered at Quizam.⁵⁴ On 3 September 1963 UNYOM abandoned the plan to use helicopters and proposed the use of three additional Otters which were to be obtained from UNCC.⁵⁵ This decision was made one day before the first two-month mandate was scheduled to end.

During Formation

28. In the latter part of June 1963, a most critical period as the Yemen force was just being built up, General

Von Horn was reported as saying that the Yemen mission was the "most dangerous, worst equipped and least politically realistic" of the missions he had had.⁵⁶ Canadian officials at Cairo stated to External Affairs that they had thought from the very beginning that the United Nations task would be "ungrateful, costly, protracted and hazardous".⁵⁷ By 5 July it was estimated that the U.A.R. had 32,000 troops in Yemen - the largest number they had ever had. General Von Horn's reports were depressing and contradictory and the U.S. Ambassador was inclined to think that the choice of Von Horn was unfortunate. There was also some doubt whether the observers would be in place before the two months, for which there was financing, expired.⁵⁸ The S.S.L.A. felt compelled to send a telegram to Washington stating: "You should make it clear it is the Canadian Government's considered judgment that until such time as this operation is feasible UNYCOM should not repeat not proceed with observer operations or engage in air reconnaissance. PERMISNY is being instructed to request Secgen to issue instructions to Von Horn in that sense..."⁵⁹

29. By 2 July General Von Horn had formally established his headquarters at Sanaa and named Colonel Branko Pavlovic, a Yugoslavian, as his second-in-command. Accommodation and living conditions at Sanaa were "primitive but acceptable" and the biggest problem was water which could not be purified by boiling at the 7200-foot altitude. The staff at Sanaa was reported to be "approximately 50" and in the whole area "approximately 96" and was expected to reach 200. The planned aircraft deployment was: two Caribou at Sanaa, two Otters and one helicopter at Najran, and two

helicopters and one Otter at Hudaida. The estimated flying time for the Caribou was 200 hours per month, Otters ⁷⁵ 60 hours per month and helicopters 25 hours per month.

30. On 5 July the Acting Air Officer Commanding Air Transport Command relayed two reports to A.F.H.Q.: one from an A.T.C. officer who had accompanied the main contingent from Trenton to Yemen and one from the Commanding Officer 134 A.T.U. These reports were recapitulated by the A/A.O.C. A.T.C. as "...it is sufficient to say that 134 A.T.U. is established in Yemen, that its personnel are housed as comfortably as can be expected in a backward country, and that they are anxious to begin patrol operations as soon as the second Caribou aircraft is received and the Otter aircraft have been assembled".⁶¹

Implementation of UNYCOM and First Mandate

31. The official date of the implementation of UNYCOM was established as 4 July 1963.⁶² The Yugoslav reconnaissance troops and the Canadian air contingent of two Caribou and three Otters were all in place by 20 July⁶³ and by 27 July 134 A.T.U. was able to report that it was operating six aircraft. Two Caribou were based at Sanaa, two Otters at Quizan and two Otters at Najran. The Caribou were those from 115 A.T.U., three Otters were from UNOC and the fourth Otter was on loan from 115 A.T.U. pending the arrival of the helicopters. The Caribou were "providing transport and liaison in the mission area as well as to Aden, Asmara and Jedda". The Otters had started preliminary

.../18

patrols to familiarize the pilots with the area but were forced to fly in pairs due to lack of communications. It was planned to set up a beacon at both Quizan and Najran because of the "featureless terrain and low visibility". The living conditions at Quizan and Najran were described as primitive. At Quizan the men were billeted in a former meteorological office and subjected to intense heat. At Najran tents were used for accommodation and the men suffered from "constantly blowing sand and dust". The Yugoslavs provided the messing for both units and the food was "reported to be good". The headquarters contingent and crews of the Caribou were billeted in a former hotel at Sanaa in crowded conditions. Their messing was hard rations supplemented by soft rations.⁶⁴

32. The Chief of the Air Staff reported to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff on 7 August that the R.C.A.F., 134 A.T.U. comprised 12 officers and 41 airmen including one officer and eight airmen assigned to the proposed helicopter role.⁶⁵ In addition, a naval technician was in the Yemen area from mid-July to mid-August to aid in preparing the helicopter for the assessment trials.⁶⁶

33. The first UNYCM observer report was optimistic and indicated that the U.A.R. had withdrawn troops - thought to total up to 2000.⁶⁷ However, this was not followed by news of any further withdrawals and by 24 July 1963 Canada was informed of a "recent" off-loading, from a Russian ship, of heavy equipment including 30 medium tanks and a considerable number of anti-tank guns, heavy mortars and vehicles. It

was considered that this equipment was too sophisticated for the use of the Yemeni forces and the implication was that the equipment was destined for the use of U.A.R. troops.⁶⁸ The aircraft were also bearing testimony to the lack of disengagement. The Otters based at Najran were fired on on 16 and 17 August, and one of the Otters had its starboard wing creased by a bullet from hostile rifle-⁶⁹men. On 23 August both Otters based at Najran were "struck by ground fire". The Commanding Officer 134 A.T.U. ordered the aircraft to avoid known hostile areas and fly above 3000 feet. However, since he could obtain no guarantee from the 'locals' that the firings would cease, he suggested that the Otters might have to grounded if there were further incidents.⁷⁰ One of the Caribou was creased by small arms⁷¹ fire on 26 August.

34. General Von Horn resigned at the end of August* because of insufficient air support, the lack of logistical support, the U.N. leave policy, discriminatory allowances and the lack of medical facilities.⁷² The Secretary-General accepted General Von Horn's resignation effective 31 August 1963 and named Colonel Pavlovic as Commander UNYCM on a temporary basis.⁷³ His appointment on a permanent basis was⁷⁴ resisted by Saudi Arabia.

*The Beirut, described on its banner as an independent political daily newspaper, ran a story on 31 August 1963 in which it said; 'Authoritative United Nations sources in Beirut yesterday levelled charges of 'betrayal and maladministration' against their New York Headquarters staff over the U.N. Observer Mission in Yemen'. The sources, of course, are not identified. Also see Reference 75.

35. At the end of the two-month period, on 4 September 1963, the Secretary-General reported to the Security Council. It was not an optimistic report and indicated that, while UNYOM was working to the best of its ability under difficult circumstances, neither Saudi Arabia nor the U.A.R. was living up to the disengagement agreement. The enforcement of the agreement was beyond the responsibility of UNYOM. However, both Saudi Arabia and the U.A.R. had agreed orally to defray the expenses of the mission for two months beyond 4 September.⁷⁶ In the report the Secretary-General attempted to explain the situation which led to General Von Horn's resignation but U Thant did say: "The mission in Yemen encounters unusual hardships. Physical conditions are severe. The terrain is rugged. Local supplies and facilities are meagre. Funds are limited. UNYOM personnel and aircraft have been subjected to gunfire and are frequently in danger".⁷⁷

36. Major-General Rikhye, the Secretary-General's Military Adviser, and Colonel Pavlovic inspected the mission and made suggestions for a different deployment of the Yugoslav contingent. It was suggested that the Yugoslav troop in Quizan move to Maydi and the troop in Sada move to Zahran. The new permanent commander, when appointed, was to consider the suggestion that the Yugoslav patrols be reduced from fifteen to six or eight; the offer of Saudi Arabia to establish check points in the buffer zone and to man them with joint Saudi and United Nations teams would be accepted. This was an offer that Von Horn had rejected.⁷⁸ On the basis of the mandate's terminating on 4 November 1963

the Secretary-General decided to appoint Major-General D.S. Gyani of India as Commander, UNYOM.⁷⁹

Additional Otters

37. When it was decided that H19 helicopters were not suitable for use in Yemen the United Nations Secretariat decided to deploy three operational Otters from the Congo to Yemen. Canada was requested to provide the necessary air and maintenance crews to operate these aircraft. The Otter on loan from UNEF was to be returned on the arrival of the three Otters from the Congo. Canada was also asked to supply a senior N.C.O. to supervise the loading of the Otters for the flight to the Yemen area.⁸⁰ Canada suggested that the loading supervision was beyond the capacity of one man and the Secretariat agreed that the R.C.A.F. dispatch "personnel they consider required to carry out this task".⁸¹ Canada officially undertook to operate and maintain the three additional Otters⁸² and sent a special technical party comprising one officer and three technicians to the Congo, departing Trenton 9 September and arriving at Leopoldville on 11 September. By 2 October the three Otter aircraft had been disassembled, flown by USAF C130 aircraft to Aden, assembled and made serviceable for local test flights. They were not completely operational due to the non-arrival of some parts.⁸³ It is interesting to note that a recommendation was made regarding the fuselage stands used in loading and transporting the Otters: "It is understood that the stands used in the New Guinea operation are at Calgary and it is recommended these be used on all future operations".⁸⁴ The special party departed Aden for

return to Canada on 2 October, "there being no further work to be done pending the arrival of parts and as the party from 134 A.T.U. would be sufficient to desnag after test flight".⁸⁵

Second Mandate

38. UNYCOM continued throughout September and October 1963. As the time approached for approval of continued United Nations participation in Yemen the Secretary-General made a report to the Security Council. Because of the lack of a firm commitment by Saudi Arabia to continue financial support, U Thant stated his intention of maintaining a civilian United Nations presence under the authority of the Secretary-General relating to the maintenance of peace and security.⁸⁶ The U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia finally agreed to pay for a further two months and the Secretary-General did not have to seek refuge in his own authority.⁸⁷ Canada agreed to continue its contribution.⁸⁸

39. In his report of 30 October the Secretary-General stated that there had been no decisive change in the situation during September and October. Checks, since 10 September, had shown that there was no military assistance from Saudi Arabia to the Yemeni royalists and that U.A.R. air activity had decreased. Although UNYCOM had become more efficient, its limitations, said the Secretary-General, "[make] it virtually impossible...to play a really helpful role in Yemen". He also stated that the settlement in Yemen was primarily political and required a political solution.

.../23

40. The functions of UNYCM were repeated as 'observing, certifying and reporting'. During this second mandate the mission had been deployed:

- a. in Yemen:
 - (i) Sanaa - UNYCM headquarters and headquarters of 134 ATU, with Caribou aircraft,
 - (ii) Hadaida - one United Nations Military Observer (UNMO) and a logistic detachment,
 - (iii) Sada - one section of Yugoslav troops;
- b. in the demilitarized zone;
 - (i) Harad - two UNMOs and one platoon of Yugoslav troops,
 - (ii) Najran - two platoons (less one section) of Yugoslav troops, four UNMOs and a 134 A.T.U. detachment of two Otters.
- c. in Saudi Arabia;
 - (i) Quizan - two UNMOs and a 134 A.T.U.⁸⁹ detachment of two Otters.

41. The Caribou were used principally on logistic, liaison flights and reconnaissance; the Otters were used on daily patrols in the Quizan and Najran areas. The two Caribou jointly logged 109 hours in September and 193 hours in October. The combined Otter force logged 126 hours in September and 111 hours in October. It was noted that the aircraft had proved to be effective in spotting convoys and reporting them to the military observations posts.⁹⁰

.../24

42. Canada was beginning to doubt the value of Otter aircraft in this operation. It was stated by A.O.C. A.T.C. that "the Yemen is no place for a single-engine aircraft". Concern about the rotation of personnel was also voiced, since the planning for Canadian participation in Yemen had been based on four or possibly six months' duration. The A.O.C., who had recently visited the Yemen, reported that "...the Yemen is a primitive country which has an inhospitable climate. For the most part personnel live at and fly at oxygen altitude but do not have oxygen equipment". He was convinced "that four months is already too long a period for some on this operation. There has been a high sickness rate and by normal standards severe living and operating conditions prevail".⁹¹

43. Canada was requested to continue the air unit and three staff officers for two months beyond 4 November,⁹² and agreed⁹³ but warned the Secretary-General that there were certain adjustments which would have to be made. The C.A.S. informed C.C.C.S. of the necessity of training Caribou replacement pilots by contract with DeHavilland and of the desirability of providing additional Caribou to the UNYOM/UNEF complex, replacing the Otters in Yemen with two Caribou.⁹⁴

Third Mandate

44. From the beginning of November there was a definite change in the complexion of UNYOM. In keeping with his report to the Security Council the Secretary-General named Pier Spinelli, the Director of the European

Office of the United Nations, to succeed General Gyani as head of UNYOM⁹⁵ and also as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.⁹⁶ The Secretary-General would not admit that the appointment was a 'prelude' to a more civilian character for UNYOM but did state that during the period, which was to end 4 January 1964, there would have to be a review of the situation - as further continuation of UNYOM⁹⁷ would have to be on a different basis.

45. Yugoslavia proposed to withdraw its troops during November and this caused serious concern in Canada. A changed role for 134 A.T.U. was envisaged and was complicated by the growing conviction that the Otters were not suitable for conditions in Yemen.⁹⁸ The Otters were also becoming a burden due to their continuing and extensive maintenance requirements.⁹⁹ It was considered that the Canadian unit was not properly equipped for a reconnaissance¹⁰⁰ function.

46. The Secretary-General received a report from Mr. Spinelli and General Gyani in which they made recommendations that would allow UNYOM to assume a more political and less military stance. These recommendations included the remarks: "the Yugoslav unit had become superfluous"; "the observer corps had to be significantly increased"; "if the Canadian government were to insist, UNYOM could do without Otters after mid-December, but...the removal of the air unit would be at cost of effectiveness of UNYOM". U Thant himself "made it clear that he could not dispense with the air unit and that its total withdrawal would oblige him to find an

alternative source...or to close down the operation". He also stated that with the increase in number and quality of observers there would be no change in the role of 134 A.T.U. and that "only token reconnaissance" would continue. It later evolved that one Yugoslav unit was to remain at Najran.

47. A visit to Quizan was made by Flight-Lieutenant P. Kelly, a medical officer from A.T.C., Trenton, to investigate the living conditions and health of the Canadian contingent. After his visit the 134 A.T.U. detachment at Quizan was withdrawn with the concurrence of UNYCOM headquarters. The patrols that had been carried out by the Otters based at Quizan were taken over by Caribou aircraft. The Caribou were able to take on this responsibility due to the reduction in their flying requirements after the departure of the Yugoslavs. By 4 December the Caribou flying consisted of two circuit flights and one flight to Aden each week. It was suggested that it would also be possible to fly the Najran patrols with a Caribou, thus eliminating the Otters and ending all R.C.A.F. outpost operations. This would permit a personnel reduction to "approximately 25" in 134 A.T.U. and, if the unit were made a detachment of 115 A.T.U., El Arish, a further reduction of five could be accomplished. These suggestions went forward from UNYCOM Headquarters, Sanaa, to the United Nations in New York and the military staff of the Secretary-General agreed with the proposal. By 6 December Canada was officially informed of the Secretary-General's agreement to withdraw the Otters from

Yemen and allow the Caribou to be attached to the R.C.A.F. unit in UNEF.¹⁰⁶ Subsequently A.T.C. reported to A.F.H.Q. that 134 A.T.U. had become a detachment of 115 A.T.U. effective 15 December 1963 and that an establishment of 28 positions was required.¹⁰⁷ A.F.H.Q. had been preparing a new Organization Order showing the official date of this transfer as 2 January 1964. It was agreed to let the official date of 2 January 1964 stand without amendment.¹⁰⁸

48. The six Otters, as of 23 December 1963, were deployed with two at El Arish, two at Quizan and two at Najran. One aircraft at each location was unserviceable. They were all subsequently made serviceable and gathered¹⁰⁹ at El Arish to be returned to the United Nations. The R.C.A.F. unit in UNEF, after the aircraft had been accepted by United Nations officials, provided maintenance¹¹⁰ for the Otters while disposal arrangements were made.

49. Knowing that U Thant intended to change the emphasis of UNYCM, Canada requested to be informed of¹¹¹ his intentions for the mission from 4 January 1964. This information was necessary to Canada since the original Cabinet approval extended to 4 January; any further Canadian participation would have to be considered and approved by the Cabinet. The Permanent Mission in New York relayed the information that the Secretary-General considered it essential to continue in Yemen but that the continuation in its existing form would again depend on the provision of funds by U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia. While the Secretariat could not announce its intention to prolong UNYCM for a

period longer than two months Canada was to expect a further eight or nine months' participation. The level of Canada's activities would be the manning of two Caribou - flying from Sanaa but based at El Arish for administration and maintenance.¹¹² The aircraft would be expected to make one supply flight and "one or two supporting reconnaissance flights weekly".¹¹³ The Secretary-General reiterated his intention to maintain UNYOM even if the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia refused to underwrite the costs. In that event, however, the mission would be on a reduced basis, but in either case the R.C.A.F. detachment was essential.¹¹⁴

The New Year

50. In anticipation of a formal request, the Canadian Cabinet decided on 3 January 1964 to continue in Yemen after 4 January "along the lines and to the extent already outlined by the Secretary-General of the United Nations". The Cabinet also decided to continue to participate as long as the S.S.E.A., in consultation with the Minister of National Defence, considered it desirable - but subject to review every six months by the government. The Secretary-General was not to appraised of this latter approval.¹¹⁵

51. The report made to the Security Council by the Secretary-General was far from optimistic. He outlined the changes that had taken place in the November-December phase. The total Yugoslav contingent had been withdrawn; the final group had left the Najran area on 25 November. Military observers had been increased to 22 and had been

deployed with three at Sanaa, ten at Najran, five at Quizan, two at Sada, one at Hudaida, and at Jeddah one liaison officer. The air unit had been changed by the withdrawal of the Otters from Quizan and Najran but the Caribou had been retained at Sanaa.

52. The mission observations led the Secretary-General to comment on the progress of disengagement in the following words: "...while developments are, in a limited way, encouraging...I reiterate the belief that the solution of the problem lies beyond the potential of UNYOM under its original mandate". However, he also stated that without UNYOM the situation would deteriorate and he sought and gained the approval from members of the Security Council to continue. Saudi Arabia and the U.A.R. agreed to continue their support for a further two months. ¹¹⁶

53. The observers had reported to the U.N. that the U.A.R. troops in Yemen had been reduced by 4000 in the November-December phase. ¹¹⁷ However Ralph Bunche, reporting at the end of the next month, estimated that "if anything numbers had been increased in January...U.A.R. force was somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000" but UNYOM itself had not come under attack. U Thant was reported as saying that he expected UNYOM to remain in Yemen at least until the middle of 1964. ¹¹⁸

54. By the end of January living conditions at Sanaa caused the R.C.A.F. to send a construction engineer there to investigate the accommodation being used by the Canadians. He was to select a new site if desirable. ¹¹⁹

55. The Permanent Mission in New York informed the Department of External Affairs on 13 February 1964 that R.C.A.F. activity in support of UNYCOM consisted of "two Caribou aircraft on continuous duty and one North Star supply flight weekly, El Arish to Sanaa"¹²⁰. In addition, an Air Adviser still remained on the staff of UNYCOM¹²¹ headquarters at Sanaa.

56. The R.C.A.F. unit complained that security of the aircraft and personnel accommodation was inadequate but was informed that security could only be obtained with an additional 30 people and increased cost to the mission. These could not be supplied. The 115 A.T.U. proposed to the Commander UNYCOM that all R.C.A.F. aircraft and personnel, with the exception of the Air Adviser, be removed from Yemen to El Arish. This movement would relieve the problem of suitable accommodation for the personnel in Sanaa and still allow air transport requirements to be met. It would also permit better utilization of the Caribou fleet in 115 A.T.U. The Air Staff Officer of UNYCOM at first opposed this proposal but reversed his stand due to increased royalist strength in the Sanaa area. He did "not feel that the U.N. will get any warning of impending revolt...nor...expect that the U.N. will enjoy any immunity in the blood bath likely to occur in a general uprising in Sanaa, since the U.N. operation has worked mainly to the benefit of the U.A.R."¹²²

57. The 115 A.T.U. detachment in Yemen informed the A.C.C. A.T.C. on 21 February that United Nations Headquarters, UNYCOM and UNEF had accepted the move of the

detachment to El Arish and that only the Air Staff Officer¹²³ and visiting air crews would be accommodated at Sanaa. From 1 March the air activity on a weekly basis would be: 1st day, El Arish to Jeddah; 2nd day, Jeddah to Quizan, Sada, Uqd and Sanaa; 3rd, 4th and 5th days, as required by UNYCOM from Sanaa; 6th day, Sanaa to Uqd, Sada, Quizan¹²⁴ and Jeddah; 7th day, Jeddah to El Arish. The North Star flights from El Arish were to be limited to two flights in March and two flights in April,¹²⁵ but this service was discontinued entirely by 7 April.¹²⁶

58. At the beginning of March, Canada received a further request to stay in Yemen for yet another two month extension, until 4 May 1964,¹²⁷ and agreed.¹²⁸

59. In April, and in anticipation of another request to extend UNYCOM for the two months from 4 May to 4 July, Canada informed the Secretary-General of its willingness¹²⁹ to continue.

60. In May the situation on the southern border of Yemen became more inflammatory. Discussions were held as to the possibility of extending UNYCOM to cover any activity in that area. The Air Staff Officer, UNYCOM, drew up a report of the air requirements that would be necessary if UNYCOM were to be so expanded. This extension of interest¹³⁰ did not develop however.

61. At a Cabinet meeting on 25 June it was agreed that Canada would continue in Yemen to "the extent of its present participation, and providing that financing continues

to be available".¹³¹ The situation in Yemen remained relatively unchanged except that it was reported: "U.A.R. strength remains between 30,000 to 40,000"¹³² an estimate that exceeded the 20,000 to 30,000 estimated by Ralph Bunche in February. Saudi Arabia and U.A.R. were again asked to provide the funds for the extension and the nations supplying the observers were requested to continue their contributions.¹³³

62. UNYOM continued at this level until 4 September 1964. The Secretary-General announced its end in a report to the Security Council on 2 September 1964¹³⁴ and expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Canada. The last R.C.A.F. aircraft left UNYOM 15 September and returned to Trenton.¹³⁵ This ended Canada's active participation in a most frustrating peace-keeping operation.

R.C.A.F. Considerations for the Future

63. As early as December 1963 the A.C.C. A.T.C. had become very concerned about the conditions under which R.C.A.F. personnel were being forced to live and operate in the Yemen. Until that time, and as it transpired for an additional eight months, the mission operated on successive two month mandates. Conditions that could be accepted for a two month period became increasingly difficult to condone as consecutive renewals extended the life of UNYOM. An R.C.A.F. Medical Officer, sent to the Yemen by Air Transport Command, reported on his return to Canada. The A.C.C. then submitted his comments to Air Force Headquarters:

...the report has been studied and has been most helpful to me in formulating my opinions of the Yemen and United Nations operations anywhere. I am disposed towards the belief that there is a feeling in United Nations circles that Canadians are an easy touch and much more malleable than other nationalities...we seem to them to be capable of existing on promises and...we begin operations with less than adequate United Nations provided facilities and equipments. The worst example of this is Yemen where living conditions of R.C.A.F. personnel are simply described as atrocious. The degradation of Canadian standards of hygiene, health, sleeping and eating is too much to expect of Canadian servicemen in peacetime operations...we in the R.C.A.F. have reached the peak of our endurance in the filthy living environment of Yemen... 136

64. These comments were received in Air Force Headquarters and instigated discussions which it was considered would lead to "organized preparations to acquire and hold, in the R.C.A.F., a capability for operations at short notice in any of the parts of the world where U.N. type of troubles seem likely..."¹³⁷ The A.O.C. A.T.C. followed up his message report with a lengthy letter report in which he summarized the difficulties encountered in both UNTEA and UNYOM - and the difficulties were almost identical: little or no U.N. advance planning; inadequate quarters and rations; no sound 'allowance' policy; dangerous operations due to lack of knowledge of the terrain and poor or non-existent navigational aids; and, in Yemen, inadequate health and hygienic standards. A 'Planning Guide for Air Transport Command Participation in U.N. Operations' was forwarded for the consideration of A.F.H.Q. and it was suggested that a similar guide for future operations might be considered desirable at the Headquarters level. It was proposed that in future participation the responsibility for assuring

adequate personnel accommodation, messing, health and hygiene standards and tactical communication and navigational aids pass from the United Nations to Canada. ¹³⁸

65. These proposals and the general problem were taken in hand by the Chief of Operations and he addressed the other sub-divisional chiefs on 31 January 1964 outlining the problem and suggesting a series of meetings. It was hoped that their joint proposals could be consolidated into a submission for the approval of the Air Council. ¹³⁹

There is no indication in the files perused in the preparation of this report that such a meeting was convened.

In Retrospect

66. The confrontation in Yemen grew to such proportions that the Secretary-General of the United Nations felt the need to use the machinery of the organization at the time that the U.N. intervention in West New Guinea was drawing to a successful close. There are a few superficial similarities in the two episodes but the differences are fundamental. It would seem that U Thant suggested a somewhat similar solution for the Yemen problem, based on the superficial similarities but without due regard to the political difference of the situation.

67. In West New Guinea the native population was not actively involved in the political machinations that engulfed it. The Netherlands was quite prepared to withdraw from West New Guinea - and the entire area - and was fighting a rear-guard action that would give the Papuans a chance to become

independent. The United Nations, by installing a temporary executive authority, provided for the Netherlands to withdraw somewhat gracefully. In essence the Dutch turned over West New Guinea to the United Nations who, in turn, allowed the Indonesians to take charge.

68. In Yemen, however, two external powers have a continuing interest in the type of government in control. Their conflict had not been on a first person basis but had been through factions warring within Yemen. Regardless of the initial intent of the United Arab Republic and Saudi Arabia, civil war continued throughout the period of Canada's involvement. Neither U.A.R. nor Saudi Arabia was willing to stand aside and see its particular way of political life, and its influence, become submerged in an area so close to its own borders. What was required was for one of the protagonists to accept political defeat. The United Nations intervention then could have fulfilled the role of face-saving so necessary in international politics. The United Nations, without a force large enough, strong enough and willing enough to go to war, cannot solve a problem such as that in Yemen without the virtual surrender of one of the belligerents or the full cooperation of both.

69. A more ill-conceived or disorganized mission than that in Yemen cannot be visualized. The Secretary-General was forced to use every political subterfuge to gain approval of the Security Council to establish the mission.

SECRET

- 36 -

Saudi Arabia and the U.A.R. created much difficulty by withholding more than two months' financial support at one time, and by naming three different Heads of the Mission in the space of seven months the United Nations contributed to the confusion. To blame the Secretary-General for the failure would be unjust. The fault lies with basic international politics and with the U.A.R. and Saudi Arabia, neither of which desired the intervention of the United Nations and neither of which fulfilled the terms of disengagement to which they had given reluctant acceptance. In the frustrating months during which UNYCOM was in existence the number of U.A.P. troops in Yemen actually increased and the southern border of Yemen become an additional problem. The U.N. then withdrew. Whether or not the existence of UNYCOM averted a major conflict, it certainly did not succeed in attaining any degree of peace in Yemen. The same problems, at approximately the same degree of intensity, still remain.

70. This report was prepared by L/Commander F.W. Bryan.

D. J. Goodspeed, Lt Col
S.F. Wise
Director of History.

SECRET

SECRET

- 37 -

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SECRET

- 42 -

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.../43

SECRET

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.../45

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