

Middle East Report by Robert Dreyfuss

Arab left challenges Brezhnev

Qaddafi and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen are out to head off Soviet and Saudi diplomacy.

While Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev condemned "ultra-leftist adventurism" in his address to the Soviet Communist Party Congress this week, the leaders of the extreme Arab left opened a campaign to spark anarchist uprisings within the Persian Gulf. Over the past month Brezhnev has repeatedly stressed the need for the big powers to form a compact to finally stabilize the Gulf.

This divergence reflects the longstanding split within the Kremlin between hardline Marxist-Leninists associated with British triple agent General Kim Philby of the KGB, and the pro-détente centrists allied to Brezhnev. Philby, a British national, inherited his connections with the Arab left through his father, the Fabian orientalist Harry St.-John Philby. It is precisely this interface of British intelligence with the KGB that is triggering extremism in the Gulf to undermine the Soviet president's bid for rapprochement and for stability.

The key players in this dangerous KGB-British ploy are the ultra-radical regimes of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Libya. PDRY president Ali Nasser Mohammed last week conferred with Libya's Muammar Qaddafi in order to coordinate the creation of regionwide liberation movements aimed at destabilizing the Arab oil producers of the Persian Gulf. The catalyst behind this

maneuver is the just-begun American military maneuvers with the Sultanate of Oman. Located on the southern border of Saudi Arabia, Oman controls the strategic Straits of Hormuz at the mouth of the Gulf.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig's vocal determination to intensify American military presence in the area has contributed to the growing anti-American radicalism in this volatile region.

Before Mohammed embarked for Libya, he warned that he would restart the now defunct Dhofar rebellion in Eastern Oman. In their communiqué, Qaddafi and Mohammed pledged to cooperate in challenging not only American presence in the area, but French military presence in Africa as well. They voiced their opposition to the regimes of Somalia and Egypt for military cooperation with the United States.

While Qaddafi and Mohammed were devising schemes to destabilize the Gulf, a Gulf Freedom Front, a coalition of liberation movements, was formed in Beirut. Included in the front is the PDRY-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman, an ally of the terrorist wing of the Palestinian movement.

The PFLO over the last month has begun a powerful propaganda campaign against not only Oman but the Arab oil-producing states, including Saudi Arabia, which just

formed a regional security pact committed to preventing terrorism.

French sources report that the rulers of the PDRY have begun to put pressure on the pro-Saudi leadership of North Yemen to form an alliance opposing the "American military threat" to the region.

The Beirut daily *As Safir*, a Libyan mouthpiece, reported this week that tensions have erupted between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen over the renewed efforts by the PDRY to forge unity with its northern neighbor.

A faction fight reportedly has erupted within the secretive North Yemenese leadership over the issue. *As Safir* reports that earlier this month border skirmishes broke out between Saudi Arabia and North Yemen.

The PDRY-backed National Democratic Front, which until recently had waged guerrilla war in North Yemen, is now conducting talks in Senaa on reunification of the Yemens. Saudi Arabia, an ardent opposer of Communist influence on the Arabian peninsula, has consistently used its wealth and influence to prevent such a merger.

A reunified Yemen would be dominated by the Marxist-Leninist leadership of the PDRY, which would intensify instability throughout the region. Historically Aden, the capital of the PDRY, has been a stronghold of British Special Intelligence operations.

Since the Islamic revolution in Iran, there have been clandestine ties established to create a terrorist capability throughout the Gulf. Earlier this month, the National Democratic Front sent a delegation to Iran, and French press sources report that Iran shortly thereafter sent a delegation to Aden.