

MEMORANDUM

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

MICROFILM	DATA
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DATE	DATE
SEP 02 1970	August 20, 1970
ORIG)	NSC
TO	PAF
	WHC
	SUB

ACTION 20753

August 20, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Harold H. Saunders *HS (over)*

SUBJECT: Message to King Faisal re Yemen

*still don't think this is a good idea*  
*JK*  
*8-24-70*

You will recall that I sent you a memo recommending that the President send a message to King Faisal commending the reconciliation of Saudi Arabia and Yemen which resulted in Saudi recognition of the YARG on July 23. You returned it to me, asking whether Yemen is very left-wing, and, if that is the case, we should pick some other occasion for a Presidential letter. The following should clarify:

The Present Yemeni republican regime is actually fairly moderate in Arab terms. From 1962 -- when a civil war resulted in the overthrow of the Imamate and the installation of radical republicans -- until 1967, Yemen was a virtual UAR protectorate and Saudi Arabia militarily supported the royalists. That radical power structure was the one that broke relations with the U.S. in 1967 following the June war; however, at the same time, Nasser was forced to withdraw his troops, thus abandoning the regime. In November 1967 the extremists were overthrown by a more moderate -- albeit republican -- tribally-oriented group which has since remained in power. Despite intermittent royalist-republican fighting, King Faisal found himself dealing with a Yemeni government more of his own persuasion and less radical in ideology than in the pre-1967 YARG.

With Faisal's approval (and the President's), earlier this year the U.S. established an Interests Section in care of the Italian Embassy in Yemen. In March at the Jidda Islamic Summit, the Saudis and Yemenis worked out a compromise arrangement whereby a royalist faction was included in the republican government and King Faisal was apparently satisfied that the YARG was properly oriented in the direction of Islamic principles. Saudi recognition followed on July 23 and the governments are now engaged in discussions to increase ties, giving special priority to Yemen's urgent economic needs. [The Yemenis receive some economic aid from the Soviets and Chinese Communists.] The YARG has also expressed interest in increasing its ties with the West; the French have extended recognition.

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E.O. 13526, Section 3.5  
RPP Email 4/26/11  
by MCH NARA Date 9/2/11  
NN 05-45/35 [1 of 2]

*Ron West, 5/5, notepid, 110031 Aug that NPK  
"Non-concurrence" on recommendation. [Signature]*

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From King Faisal's view, this could be considered an act of statesmanship on his part to come to terms with the republicans after eight years of Saudi-Yemeni warfare. Given his familiar and persistent theme of radical encirclement, no doubt his greater concern at the moment is with the extremists regime in South Yemen. Closer Saudi-YARG relations could be viewed as one -- although small -- step towards increasing the chances for stability in the Arabian peninsula.

Recommendation: That you seek the President's approval via the attached memo of a brief message to King Faisal. [Text cleared by Mr. Keogh.]

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