Most Urgent

THE ROYAL PALACE,
Mukalla,
1st March, 1967

Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of
State for Foreign Affairs,
Foreign Office, Downing Street,
London.

Dear Sir,

I confirm the receipt of a Secret and Personal letter Ref.GH/41/6 dated 28th December,66 from His Excellency, Sir Richard Turnbull, the British High Commissioner for Aden and its Protectorates which confirm the intention of Her Britannic Majesty's Government to bring , I repeat, bring Aden and the Protectorates to independence by 1968 and that too by January, or so it has been hinted.

2. As you well know, for a country to stand on its own feet it must have a strong well organised government with a sound economy to finance its Civil Service and Armed Forces as well as to carry out major development projects. For a country to achieve this it must have an adequate source of revenue, which if not sufficient is supplemented by foreign aid; and if a country has not got this, then it, by any standards would have difficulty in administering itself; an the more so, it its revenue , by no means sufficient for any form of greater development, is cut down as is our case in the Quaiti State.

3. His Excellency in his letter as mentioned above used the phrase that it was his government's intention to ' bring the territory to independence. ' To bring a territory to independence it must obviously be provided with the things mentioned in para (2), otherwise the administration would face difficulties - in other words it would be unfit for independence. So I strongly suggest a representative from your government in London be sent as soon as possible to see what has been done to these ends.

4. My State, the largest in South Arabia, is more than 90,000 sq. miles in area and has a population of between 300,000 and 500,000; double the number have migrated owing to poverty. They used to make a living abroad and send what money they could to their families in the form of remittances for their livelihood. These have been growing less with the years owing to the economising policy which most emergent nations have taken up, causing thereby economic upheavals in my State.

5. Ever since one of my Forefathers entered into the first Agreement with the British Government on 17th November,1873, we have been under perpetual subjection to Her Majesty's Government and more so when the Treaties of 29th May,1882 and 12th May,1888 were signed. The big stumbling block to our progress and the main advantage to the British Government has been that we were not allowed any form of contact, especially direct, with other countries; such contact whilst working out to our advantage could have worked out to the British Government's disadvantage, especially as European Powers were competing for Empire and world domination at that time. However, we stuck to our pledges and fulfilled them to the word as the records would show, and as no other rulers in the area had done, but to what avail ? My State has been virtually under indirect British Rule for 85 years or more, the result of which I invite any of your representatives to come and see - a very generous reward indeed for being the most co-operative people in the area ! It was the Quaitis who aided the British in strengthening their foothold in the area by being one of, if not the most co-operative rulers in every way, and one of the first to establish good relations on a high level with the British.

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6. One of the foremost reasons for this behaviour was the expectancy that the British Government would repay them for their goodwill and co-operation by helping them technically and financially in the development of their State. It was in this hope, that my grandfather, Sultan Sir Saleh Bin Ghalib, entered into the Advisory Treaty of 13th August, 1937, in which he pledged, as is clearly indicated in article (1), to abide by all advice offered to him by the Resident Adviser - who has been used as a mouthpiece of Whitehall in matters concerning higher politics. The article itself meant far more in practice that it seems to on paper.

7. We the Quaiti Rulers sacrificed our sovereignty and much more in the hope that the recompense for this from the British would work out for the improvement of the lot of our subjects. Sultan Sir Saleh Bin Ghalib and his successors have abided fully by the above mentioned treaty in the spirit in which it was signed, as your government's records will show; and if we have breached any of its terms in your government's view then we are ignorant of it, for we have not been informed of our fault. However, as the representatives of Her Majesty's Government had been the signatories of the treaty on one part, we had expected the British Government to uphold this treaty in the spirit in which it was signed.

8. We do not deny that Her Majesty's Government has aided us financially and technically to a certain extent, but the limits of this extent, as any one who has visited my State is well aware, are too limited to be mentioned; and especially so if we are to manage ourselves after independence. As we have already made clear earlier in our letter for a State to become independent and maintain its independence it is essential for it to be developed to a certain degree, and it must have a large enough source of revenue to maintain itself, and here we have neither. My State has vast potential for increasing its revenue through capital development of its many resources, but we ourselves have been financially handicapped and Her Majesty's Government, I regret to say, has not been helpful in the financial and technical field. Furthermore Her Majesty's Government has committed itself to <u>bring</u> this territory to independence by 1968; but we regret to say that we have seen no action aimed towards this end.

9. As you well know, time waits for no one and already a lot of it has been wasted, so I suggest somebody responsible comes from London as soon as possible to study the situation here and forward to you a full report on it and the speedy action required to remedy our ailments, in preparation for our independence.

10. Her Majesty's Government has often enough voted explicitly in favour of United Nations Resolutions on aiding underdeveloped countries and has also taken an active part in it. Here in our case, Britain is pledged by the spirit of many a treaty to follow in these steps, but has not done so ! Is this not disagreeing with what she has pledged above and spoken in favour of so often in the United Nations ?

11. We fully support the intention of Her Majesty's Government to <u>bring</u> South Arabia to independence by 1968, but is the one sided abrogation of treaties, especially by a great power, after it has derived its full benefits from them an honorable deed ? Is this how Britain, who not so long ago expelled Sultan Ali Abdulkarim Al-Abdali of Lahaj - a colleague of ours - from his State, for bringing one such thought into his head, chooses to respect its obligations ?

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12. We know we cannot enforce our will on you as you can, and have done on us, by methods of which one has just been mentioned. British Policy in this matter is against all codes of International behaviour as is universally understood. Hence, we demand that Britain honour its pledges and obligations to the spirit of the treaties existing between her and us, as she is duty bound to do, by preparing us fully for our independence in matters of defence and economy. Little time is left for her to do so, and the sole responsibility for this rests on her, for taking advanced political steps without parallel economic development. However we have proposals to make on this matter which will not affect the independence target date set.

13. No one can deny that my State has contributed to British commercial progress and prosperity by safeguarding part of the once all-important route through Suez to the rich far eastern markets on which Britain depended so much economically in the past. My predecessors not only did this, hence setting the example for their colleagues to follow, but also induced them to do so. I appeal to your humane reasoning; is this the type of treatment we deserve for doing so ? Is this the way to behave after having monopolised a people's freedom for nearly a century solely for one's own good !

14. You may wonder why this has come directly and so late from us. However, protocol and routine demand that we should contact you through Aden, and so we did in the past, but exactly to what benefit ? One must see to believe that none of our major demands have been met; although we have had sweet replies often enough, though amounting to nothing either from Aden or from London, or from both - a sorry result indeed of ignorance. We have ventured to address you directly this time as you are the successor of the authorities who signed the treaties on Britain's behalf. I sincerely hope that you will give this letter personal and serious attention, as something affecting both Britain's interests and her good name.

15. We look forward to hearing from you very soon that you can agree to send a representative of some weight to us in Mukalla to see for himself and to discuss all the problems which confront us. Please treat this request as urgent; time is short and the future of our country and people is at stake.

I have the honour to remain,

Yours faithfully,

SULTAN GHALIB BIN AWADH AL-QUAITI

Copy to:-

His Excellency,
The British High Commissioner for Aden State,
Steamer Point,
Aden