

ELECTION DAY IN ADEN

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Sunday, April 27, 1997, was election day in Yemen. All 301 seats in Yemen's Parliament were to be decided upon. This was only the second parliamentary elections to be held since the unification of former North and South Yemens in May 1990. The first parliamentary elections had been held in April 1993. Just over a year later, the Yemeni Socialist party (YSP) — the party that had ruled South Yemen before unification and which had gained far fewer seats in the 1993 elections than it had expected — attempted to reestablish the South's independence militarily. Despite support from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the secessionist effort was defeated after a couple of months of fighting.¹

But while unity was restored, progress toward democracy suffered a setback. Most of the independent newspapers that had popped up at the time of unification had ceased publication by the 1994 civil war. The Parliament elected in 1993 played a far less active role in Yemeni politics than had the "transitional" Parliament (consisting of the partially elected North Yemeni Parliament and the all-YSP appointed South Yemeni Parliament) before it.² The president, Ali Abdallah Salih (a northerner), often took actions without consulting Parliament. Human-rights organizations, including Middle East Watch and Amnesty International, reported widespread abuses

on the part of the security services, which are responsible only to the president.³

Still, there were some signs that democracy in Yemen was not dead. Despite the civil war, the YSP was allowed to continue operating as a political party afterward (although the top 17 leaders of the breakaway regime have not been permitted to return). In addition, some independent newspapers continued to publish, including the English-language *Yemen Times*, which even has its own web page now.⁴

When President Salih announced that parliamentary elections would be held in April 1997, and that international observers would be invited to monitor them, there was much skepticism about whether they could be truly free and fair. Many denounced the elections in advance as a sham. Believing that they would be rigged in favor of the party supporting President Salih (the General People's Congress [GPC]), the YSP decided to boycott the elections altogether.⁵ Others, however, were more optimistic. Although noting that problems existed, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) issued a generally favorable assessment of the government's preparations for the elections about a month before they occurred.⁶

Would these parliamentary elections be free and fair? This question became of immediate interest to me when, nine days before the elections, I was asked to serve as an international observer for them by Dr.

Abd al-Karim al-Iryani, the Yemeni foreign minister and head of the GPC. What follows is a personal account of my experiences just before and during the elections

Sanaa, the Yemeni capital, was already awash with international observers and journalists by the time I arrived there on the morning of Friday, April 25. A particularly large observer delegation drawn from several countries had been sent over by the NDI. Dr. al-Iryani had invited several others to observe the elections as well. At both the press conference and a reception we saw him at that Friday morning, Dr. al-Iryani asked his American guests to let him know where each of us wanted to be on election day. He also told us we were free to meet with whomever we wanted and encouraged us to talk with opposition party leaders in order to learn their viewpoints.

I had decided to take him up on his offer even before he made it. Three of my Yemeni friends in the Washington area, all critics of the government, had arranged for me to chew qat (a leaf with a mildly stimulating effect) with leaders from several of the opposition parties that night. There are 14 political parties in Yemen. The three most important ones are the GPC, the YSP and Islah— an Islamic party. The others, including three Nasserist and two pro-Iraqi Baath parties, are relatively small, but quite vocal.

The YSP leaders that night expressed deep bitterness about the elections. They were especially angry that the government had not returned the property and assets it had seized from the YSP during the civil war until the month before the elections. They claimed that the government was employing fraudulent means to assure a GPC victory. They claimed that the government had made it difficult for YSP

supporters to register to vote while padding the roll with its own supporters. GPC candidates received government support for their campaigns while opposition candidates did not. They also predicted that the vote count would not be honest, especially in Aden, the capital of the South when it had been independent. But while the YSP could do nothing to prevent this, they believed that voters — especially in the South — would heed the YSP boycott. A low turnout at the polls would demonstrate to the international observers that the Yemeni public did not regard the elections as being free and fair.

The charges that these YSP leaders leveled at the government were extremely serious. It struck me, however, that many of these charges could not really be proven, but instead were matters of belief. But this belief in the government's determination to steal the elections and its general malevolence was maintained with an intense passion. Still, just because they could not prove their accusations did not mean they were untrue. Since they had been especially adamant that the GPC would attempt to steal the elections in Aden, I decided to spend election day there.

A bit of background is necessary regarding how the parliamentary elections were organized. In each of the 301 parliamentary constituencies, candidates could run either with a party affiliation or as independents. Although the YSP was officially boycotting the elections, several YSP members from the outgoing parliament were running as independents for the new one. Many independent candidates were also associated with the other parties, including the GPC and Islah. There were even some independents who really were independent.

The reason there were so many independent candidates linked to the GPC and Islah, we had heard repeatedly, was that there was an agreement between the two big parties not to compete against each other in all but 50 or so districts. But as the elections approached, relations between the two parties deteriorated, and each was running "independent" candidates in the constituencies where they had agreed not to compete with the other. Everyone knew, however, which "independent" candidates were affiliated with which party.

As we gathered at the Foreign Ministry that night to wait for Dr. al-Iryani, his American guests compared notes. The group included seasoned Yemeni watchers Robert Burrowes from the University of Washington; Michael Hudson from Georgetown University; and William Rugh, a former U.S. ambassador to Yemen; as well as an intrepid young Ph.D. candidate from American University, Laura Drake, who had just spent nine days in Iran before coming to Yemen and who was going on to Lebanon afterward.

The group was concerned that this reported GPC-Islah agreement not to compete against each other in so many constituencies undercut the democratic process. In our meeting with him, we asked Dr. al-Iryani whether such an agreement had been reached. He responded that there had not been just one such agreement, but several. The problem, he stated, was that they kept breaking down as each party reevaluated its prospects in various constituencies. In addition, these agreements were extremely unpopular with each party's activists in the various constituencies, who often decided themselves to run as independents. Dr. al-Iryani hotly denied that these agreements undercut democracy. He pointed out that

such agreements were a typical feature of multiparty parliamentary elections in other countries.

The next morning, I got a strong sense of the passion involved in the parliamentary races as four of us accompanied Dr. al-Iryani to three election-eve campaign rallies (two for GPC candidates and one for an independent linked to the GPC). The speakers at these rallies gave emotional speeches urging support for President Salih and the GPC, who had saved the country from "communism" and disunity and who must now save it from "extremism" and "terrorism" — code words for Islah. The GPC, by contrast, was portrayed as the party of moderation and progress. The crowd at each rally responded enthusiastically. It was obvious, though, that Yemeni elections are also subject to the adage that all politics are local. At the second rally, there was a large banner announcing the GPC candidate's intention to build a new sewer system for his constituents.

There appeared to be a genuine degree of voter interest in the elections in Sanaa. During the five-hour car trip from Sanaa to Aden, I wondered whether this would also be true in the South or whether the people there would heed the YSP boycott. There was much speculation about this at the Aden Hotel that evening, where several of the National Democratic Institute's observers were based. Also at the hotel that night were representatives from a Yemeni group called MOST (Media and Observers Support Team), which described itself as "a voluntary group of academics, professionals and intellectuals" that had been formed to facilitate the work of the international observers. One of its members, Dr. M. A. Qubaty of Sanaa

University, agreed to accompany me to the polls the next day.

There are ten parliamentary constituencies in Aden (numbers 19-28 out of the country's 301 constituencies).⁷ We decided to try to go to all of the city's ten constituencies. We went first to a polling place in Aden 20, as it was called. Each constituency had several polling places (such as 20A, 20B, etc.), and each polling place contained six to eight ballot boxes to which 250-350 voters had been assigned. Men and women voted separately.

The voting was organized the same way everywhere. Each ballot box was housed in a separate room. In addition, each of these rooms contained a table where the election committee of three to four sat. There were also chairs for candidate representatives (each candidate was entitled to have one representative present at each ballot box) and other observers, including members of the Arab Democratic Institute and international observers such as myself.

The system worked as follows: The electoral committee, candidate representatives and others were to gather in the rooms with the ballot boxes before the voting started. After verifying that the box was empty, it would be locked with two locks and its sides sealed, leaving only a slit on the top for folded ballots. The electoral committee and the candidate representatives were to stay with the box all day, including during its transfer to the counting centers after the polls were closed. There the boxes would be opened and the ballots unfolded and counted in front of the electoral committee, candidate representatives and others.

The ballots were printed on long, rectangular pink paper. Due to Yemen's

high rate of illiteracy — estimated to be about 40 percent of the adult population⁸ — each candidate on the ballot was represented by a symbol. There were as many as twenty candidates on the ballot in each constituency, but several candidates had withdrawn after the ballots had been printed. The electoral committee then had to undertake the dreary task of marking an X on every ballot over the symbol of all candidates who had withdrawn.

The voting process involved several steps. After being admitted to the polling station and determining which ballot box he or she was assigned to, the voter had to present a valid registration card with a picture ID, sort of like a passport. Since complaints had arisen that there were many people who had registered but had not yet received this voter ID, provision was made for them to present the receipt they received when they registered plus some other form of ID. Bona fides having been established, the voter was then given a pink ballot and directed to the room's single curtained polling booth. After marking a choice with a check mark (not an X!), the voter then folded the ballot and deposited it in the box. If the voter had a valid ID (most did), a notation was made on it that he or she had voted. The voter then had to put a thumb on an ink pad and place the print next to his or her name on the computerized voting roster. Finally, the voter's entire left thumb was dipped into indelible ink which would not begin to wear off until two days later (this ink, donated by the United Nations, is apparently used for this same purpose in some 70 other countries).

Each time we entered a room with a ballot box, Dr. Qubaty introduced me as an international observer and himself as a member of MOST. I would then ask if

anyone spoke English. A few did, but most did not; this was not surprising considering that the British had left in 1967, and South Yemen had minimal interaction with the West when it was ruled by the YSP. I would then ask if anyone spoke Russian. A larger number did, having studied in the former USSR before Yemeni unity. The Yemenis found it amusing that an American spoke Russian. For those who spoke only Arabic, Dr. Qubaty provided translation.

In Aden 20, thirteen of the original twenty candidates remained on the ballot; seven had withdrawn. When we arrived at 8:00 a.m., the polls had not yet opened, but a long line of voters had already formed outside both the men's and the women's entrances. (I always visited both the men's and the women's polling places. I never saw any Yemeni women in the men's areas, but in the women's areas there were often men, including security guards and the male relatives of the female election officials). Inside, the election officials were determining precisely who would administer each of the steps outlined above as well as crossing out the symbols of withdrawn candidates.

Administrative matters got settled, but the polls still did not open; not all the candidate representatives had shown up. I was on the women's side and could see that the line of voters was becoming increasingly impatient. At 8:45 a.m., after a few more candidate representatives had shown up, the woman in charge here (with

voluble encouragement from her husband) decided that candidate representatives had had ample opportunity to arrive, and so opened the polls. The first few votes took a long time to be cast as the election committees in each ballot-box room got used to dealing with actual voters. Soon, however, the line started flowing smoothly. I went over to the men's side, where voting was proceeding at a steady pace. About a hundred were waiting in line. It was evident that people were not heeding the YSP's boycott here; they wanted to vote.

We then went to Aden 19, where there were 16 on the ballot, seven had withdrawn, and nine were still running. There was a large turnout of both men and women here too, and voting was proceeding steadily. Dr. Qubaty and I were especially impressed with how efficiently the polling was occurring at a women's

ballot box where the chair of the election committee was the headmistress at a school for girls.

We next proceeded to Aden 26, where there were fourteen on the ballot and nine still running. Things were not going quite

so smoothly here. On the men's side, there was a very long line of impatient voters. They seemed to be waiting for one of the ballot boxes, while there was no line at all for the one right next to it. As I walked into a room with a ballot box for women (26-B-3), I observed that there were two people in the voting booth. When I asked for an explanation, I was told that the voter was illiterate, and so someone was "assisting" her. I pointed out that the

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ballot contained symbols so that illiterates would not need assistance. An argument then developed between Dr. Qubaty and the election committee over the proper procedure for illiterate voters. When I went outside, one of the citizen observers followed and told me that the election committee actually knew that illiterate voters were supposed to mark their ballots without help, but a security guard had directed that they could receive "assistance." Prior to my arrival, she told me, there had been three other instances of such assistance and in all four cases, the people marking the ballot for the illiterate voter were known supporters of Islah. In the meantime, Dr. Qubaty had complained to the man in charge of this polling station, who then directed that illiterate voters not be "assisted."

These problems, however, were minor compared to those we observed in Aden 27 (where there were 17 on the ballot, with twelve still running). There were long lines of men and women waiting to vote here. I first visited a men's ballot box (27-A-3). Just as I walked in, I observed two men "assisting" a voter in the polling booth. When I asked the candidate representatives present whether this had happened before, they responded that it had happened on seven occasions previously. There was obviously considerable animosity in the room between the election committee and the candidate representatives and poll watchers. I sat down next to one of the latter, who told me that when he complained after the first instance in which an illiterate voter was "assisted" in the polling booth, he was threatened.

He then described to us the complicated political situation in this constituency. The seat had been held by a

YSP member in the outgoing Parliament. Disagreeing with the YSP call for boycotting the 1997 elections, the member decided to run as an independent. The GPC was not running an official candidate here. Islah, however, was determined to snatch the seat away from its socialist incumbent. Islahis had been involved in all instances in which illiterate voters were provided assistance. Further, the election committees were dominated by Islahis. Hearing reports about what was happening, the incumbent MP had withdrawn all his candidate representatives from the polls (except for one — the candidate's brother — who refused to leave).

We then walked over to the women's side, stopping in at ballot box 27-A-11. There were no voters there when I arrived. I asked the poll watchers whether there has been any irregularities. One woman reported that she had witnessed "many" instances of illiterate voters being "assisted" in marking their ballots, mostly by Islah supporters. She said she intended to file a complaint.

I then visited another woman's ballot box (27-A-8). As I walked in, I observed two women "assisting" a voter mark her ballot. There was an atmosphere of extreme hostility in the room. I asked the candidate representatives present if they had witnessed other instances of someone marking a voter's ballot for her. One said this had occurred in fully half the votes so far. Another, the candidate representative for Islah, claimed that it had not happened at all. The third and fourth candidate representatives said it had occurred in 20 and 40 cases, respectively. Dr. Qubaty and the electoral committee then engaged in a high-decibel argument in which the latter vigorously defended the practice of "assisting" the illiterate.

I walked outside while this debate continued. A woman wearing a blue Arab Democratic Institute sash then approached me. Just as she began to speak, a man came over and addressed her in an unpleasant tone of voice. Several women in the vicinity then shooed him away. Dr. Qubaty came out and asked the man who he was; he said he was from "security" and that the woman from ADI should not be talking with foreign men like me. After the "security" man had moved off, the woman from ADI told me that in one of the women's polling places at 27-A, the election committee members insisted that voters mark their ballots in front of them and not privately in the polling booths. Dr. Qubaty complained to the man in charge here, but to no avail.

Clearly, there were massive irregularities in Aden 27. Nor was I the only international observer to see this. After lunch, I spoke to two Dutch observers with the NDI delegation. They had visited 27-B that morning and had witnessed Islah campaigning *inside* the polling place.

It was already early afternoon, so Dr. Qubaty and I decided to break for lunch. We went to a typical Yemeni restaurant. While we were eating, one of the patrons addressed the rest of us. Dr. Qubaty translated for me: "Do you want Islah? Did you vote for Islah? Well, you're going to get Islah whether you want it or not! They're taking the entire city!" Rumors were obviously flying. We speculated that they might have been sparked by what was happening in Aden 27.

It was almost four o'clock by the time we reached Aden 21-A, where there were eleven candidates on the ballot, but only three were still running. Unlike the polling stations we had visited previously, there

were hardly any voters here. I asked if this was a constituency in which the YSP boycott had been effective. Not at all, I was told by the man in charge of the polling place, there had been plenty of voters there in the morning, but people didn't want to come out now in the afternoon heat (it was in fact hot and muggy). He predicted that voters would show up again as the evening approached.

He said that the instructions the polling places had received were that they should close at 6:00 p.m. unless there were voters still in line, in which case they should stay open until 8:00 p.m. He indicated that he was going to keep his polling place open until 8:00, as he knew people who would prefer to come out later. In the meantime, he insisted that I make a note of how many people had voted so far. On the men's side, 115 out of 305 registered voters had voted in Aden 21-A-2 while 120 out of 320 had voted in Aden 21-A-3. On the women's side, 73 out of 274 had voted in Aden 21-A-4 while 57 out of 259 had done so in Aden 21-A-5. The female vote had obviously been less than the male. But more women, he predicted (as did several of the female election-committee members) were likely to show up as it became cooler. I left Aden 21-A with the feeling that the polls here were being managed conscientiously.

In Aden 23, there were fourteen candidates on the ballot, with only eight still running. As I arrived at ballot box 23-H-2 (men's), I observed a voter being "assisted" by someone who marked the ballot, folded it up, and deposited it in the ballot box without the voter having looked at it. One of the candidate representatives, who said he was from the GPC, claimed that this had only happened on three or four previous occasions. From the way he

spoke, however, he appeared extremely sympathetic to Islah. Something strange was going on. As of 5:00 p.m., 155 out of 310 registered voters had cast their ballots at 23-H-2 while 186 out of 323 had done so at 23-H-1 (men's).

We then went over to the women's side. Apparently, two smaller voting stations were co-located with each other, since the ballot boxes here were marked 23-W. By this time, 115 out of 340 women had voted at 23-W-4 while 150 out of 340 had voted at 23-W-5. The women's voting appeared to be operating smoothly, and I received no complaints of irregularities here.

We then decided to visit another polling place in this constituency — 23-A. At 5:30 p.m., 150 out of 340 had voted at 23-A-1 (men's) while 138 out of 306 had voted at 23-A-4 (women's). On both the men's and the women's sides, there were 20 or so voters waiting in line. The poll watchers and candidate representatives on the women's side said that there had been 20 illiterate voters here. Five had voted completely alone, but fifteen who requested help followed another procedure: after someone else had marked the ballot for the voter, the ballot was then shown to all the other women in the room so that they could verify that it had been marked as per the voter's instructions. The illiterates had voted either for "Horse" (GPC) or "Mountain" (an independent with ties to Islah). Although these votes were obviously not secret, it appears that the electoral committee here was attempting to ensure that they were cast fairly.

In Aden 22, there were 18 on the ballot and fourteen still running. We reached 22-A at 6:00 p.m., where the polls were still open and there were voters in line. Dr. Qubaty complained to me that there was a

pro-Islah statement painted above the entrance to this polling station: "Islam is religion, state, and law." Still, the voting here appeared to be proceeding smoothly. In 22-A-6 (women's), 122 out of the 340 registered had voted. The poll watchers said that there had been eight illiterate voters here, but that all of them had voted alone. In 22-A-4 (men's), 185 out of the 356 registered here had voted. According to the poll watchers, there had been 15 illiterate voters. They were told in front of everyone what the symbols on the ballot meant, but then voted alone.

In Aden 25, there were 13 candidates on the ballot, four having withdrawn. We reached 25-A at 6:30; the polls were still open. In 25-A-2 (men's), 174 out of 390 registered had voted. There had been no illiterate voters here (this was a relatively well-to-do area). In 25-A-4 (women's), 152 out of 334 had voted. Of the six illiterate voters here, each had come with a companion. The woman in charge of the voting had explained all the symbols on the ballot to the voter in front of her companion; the voter had then voted by herself. Things were obviously flowing very smoothly here.

This was not the case in Aden 24. We arrived at 24-A at 6:45 p.m. The gates were closed, and there was an angry crowd outside. People said that the voting had been stopped at 6:00 p.m. even though voters were waiting in line. A woman said that the polls had also been closed at 24-B even though people were also waiting there. Dr. Qubaty and I managed to get inside and found the man in charge of the polling place. He and the others there seemed extremely nervous. When asked why the polls had been closed, he said that nobody had been in line at six o'clock. Since polling places were to be kept open

until eight o'clock only if there were citizens waiting to vote, he had closed the polls. I asked him if he could reopen the polls now that there were voters outside. He said that he couldn't do this since he had already opened the ballot boxes. Seeing our shocked response to this, he then said that, no, he hadn't actually opened them, but he couldn't just reopen the polls. Dr. Qubaty argued with him heatedly, but to no avail. We went back out to the gate and I asked for a show of hands from all those who wanted to vote; there were 50. Several people said that not only had the gates been shut at 6:00, but that all those waiting inside the polling place had been expelled.

We wondered if other polls had closed. We drove over to 25-E; it was still open and people were voting. As we had already been to Aden 25, we decided to move on to the last constituency, Aden 28, which was some distance away. We arrived at 28-A at 7:30. The gates had been shut here too, and there was a small crowd waiting outside. Inside, the man in charge said that he had closed the gates to the polling place at 6:00, but that all those in line were allowed to vote, a process that wasn't completed until 6:45. Back outside, I counted 25 people who still wanted to vote.

When we got back to the Aden Hotel at 8:00 p.m. sharp, we rushed up to my room to see the news on Aden TV. Unfortunately, we couldn't get any local stations: the hotel had apparently pre-set all the television channels to international

stations. On the BBC, though, there was a story about the Yemeni elections. The BBC reported that Islah was charging the GPC with electoral fraud. Dr. Qubaty and I burst out laughing. Virtually all the irregularities we had seen today were attributable to Islah.

From all the accounts that I heard, the tabulating of the ballots was a very slow process. By May 2, the outcome of four races was still unclear. Of the 297 which were decided, however, the results were as follows: General People's Congress, 187; Islah, 52; the Arab Socialist Baath party, 2;

the Nasserite Unionist People's party, 3; and Independents, 53.'

Were the elections free and fair? Islah, as was mentioned, has charged the GPC with electoral fraud.¹⁰ The National Democratic Institute,

by contrast, issued a relatively favorable assessment." From my own experience in Aden, it seemed to me that the government and most of the citizens manning the polling places were trying hard to make the elections work. The large voter turnout — and even the anger of people at Aden 24 and 28 when they couldn't vote — shows that people regarded the elections as very important.

Clearly, there were problems. I myself witnessed irregularities and outright intimidation, especially at Aden 27. Some of the problems, though, may have been due more to confusion than to ill will. The instructions about when to close the polls, for example, may have honestly been interpreted differently at different polling

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places. Instead of establishing a provisional closing time at 6:00 that could be extended to 8:00, the polls just should have closed at 8:00. Nor was there a uniform procedure developed for how to deal with illiterate voters. Many polling places attempted to solve this problem conscientiously, though often at the cost of ballot secrecy. Elsewhere, illiterate voters were seen as an opportunity for fraud.

Is it really credible, then, that the GPC won such a lopsided majority, considering all the problems in Yemen described earlier? I believe it is, at least if one considers the choice from the perspective of the educated voter. Although there are fourteen political parties operating in Yemen, only the GPC, the YSP, and Islah had a chance of winning. The rest are small groups representing failed ideologies (such as Nasserism or Baathism); not one of them is democratic. With the YSP having boycotted the elections, then, the real choice before the voter came down to one between the GPC and Islah.

Although Islahis like to portray themselves as Islamic democrats, they are not above the methods they accuse others of using to get their way, as Islah's behavior in Aden 27 demonstrated. Women in particular fear that even greater limits will be placed on them if Islah should come to power.

Had it chosen to participate in the elections, the YSP could have been a more attractive alternative than Islah to many voters. But while most Marxist parties in Europe and even parts of the Third World have denounced their past and undergone a democratic transformation, the YSP has not. It has kept basically the same leadership, which inflicted years of misery on South Yemen before unification, and a disastrous civil war on it afterward. Far

from being a sign of high-minded democratic principles, the YSP's boycott was actually symptomatic of its own lack of democratic transformation. In order for the YSP to really be a credible alternative to the GPC, it will first have to undergo such a transformation — involving a complete change of leadership — if it is to emulate the revival that other Marxist parties have experienced since the collapse of communism.

The GPC cannot really be said to be a democratic party either, but it is understandable why voters fearing Islah and not wishing to waste their vote on one of the minor parties would cast their ballot for it. Unlike the ideological visions of either the YSP or Islah, the GPC is at least a pragmatic party. And it was the GPC and President Salih which both initiated and sustained Yemen's democratization when they did not have to do so.

But while President Salih and the GPC have benefited from a genuine degree of gratitude for their role in fostering elections, they have also created expectations among the Yemeni populace that the elections will lead to increasingly responsive, and responsible, government. If these expectations are not met, popular support will not last. And while holding relatively free elections is an important achievement, what happens after them is obviously important too. The newly elected Parliament must be able to function as an effective legislative body if progress toward democracy is to continue.

In addition, obstacles to democracy also need to be reduced. Among the most important of these are the powerful security services, which operate outside the law. Even prominent members of the GPC say privately that the security services need to be drastically downsized as well as made

accountable for their actions. Movement on this front would also serve to increase trust and cooperation among political parties. I fear that the absence of such trust now will only result in the opposition parties interpreting their electoral loss as being due to the GPC's machinations and

not concentrating on what they need to do to attract voters in the next elections. This is something Yemen cannot afford. As one woman pollwatcher in Aden 25 told me as we waited for the polls to open there, "Yemen needs good government, not ideological government."

'For analyses of these events, see Jamal S. Al-Suwaidi, ed., *The Yemeni War of 1994: Causes and Consequences* (Saqi Books/The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1995).

'Abdu H. Sharif, "The Post-Unification Yemeni Parliament and Democratization in Comparative Perspective," paper given at the Middle East Studies Association, November 21-24, 1996.

"Human Rights in Yemen During and After the 1994 War," Human Rights Watch/Middle East, October 1994; and "Ratification without Implementation: The State of Human Rights in Yemen," Amnesty International Country Report, March 1997.

<http://195.94.0.34:80/yementimes/>

***The Economist*, April 19, 1997, pp. 44-45.**

"National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, "Yemen's Pre-Elections Assessment Report," March 23, 1997.

'Aden Governorate contains an eleventh constituency, but this is located on Socotra Island — far to the south of the mainland.

'By one estimate, illiteracy rates run as high as 84 percent in some rural areas. See Brian Whitaker, "Doves and Eagles Fight for Votes," *The Guardian*, April 24, 1997.

**"Primary Results of the 1997 Parliamentary Elections," May 2, 1997 [www.gpc.org.ye/Tabl].
Islah later gained one seat, and another went to an independent.**

"According to the *Yemen Times*, eight of Islah's "leading ideologues" failed to win the seats they were running for. "PGC and Islah Agree to Continue Working Together," *Yemen Times*, May 5, 1997.

"National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, "Preliminary Statement on the NDI Observer Delegation to the April 27, 1997 Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of Yemen," April 30, 1997.