

This PDF was generated on 18/01/2022 from online resources of  
the **Qatar Digital Library**

The online record can be viewed at:

[http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc\\_100000000833.0x000058](http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100000000833.0x000058)

It contains extra information, high resolution zoomable views and transcriptions.

**'Memorandum Regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the Vicinity of Aden,  
especially in Reference to the Amir of Zhali.'**

<b>Holding Institution</b>	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
<b>Reference</b>	IOR/L/PS/18/B30
<b>Date(s)</b>	1 Oct 1885 (CE, Gregorian)
<b>Written in</b>	English in Latin
<b>Extent and Format</b>	2 folios
<b>Copyright for document</b>	<a href="#">Open Government Licence</a>



**About this record**

A memorandum written by the Assistant Political Resident at Aden, Major John Muir Hunter, suggesting proposals to formalise with treaties British relations with a number of tribes in the vicinity of Aden in order to limit the encroaching influence of the Turkish Porte. He also suggests pensioning off the Amir of Zhali. This is followed by a second memorandum, by Lieutenant-General John William Schneider, who concurs with the suggestion to formalise British relations with the tribes. However, rather than pensioning off the Amir of Zhali, he proposes instead to inform the Amir that his subsidy would be continued only as long as he is recognised as Amir by a considerable portion of his tribesmen.

'Memorandum Regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the Vicinity of Aden,  
especially in Reference to the Amir of Zhali.' [110r] (1/4)

Confidential.

MEMORANDUM regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the vicinity  
of Aden, especially in reference to the Amir of Zhali. By Major  
F. M. HUNTER, C.S.I., Assistant Political Resident at Aden.

The present understanding with the Porte, in respect to the tribes in the vicinity of Aden is that their independence must be respected, because they are in subsidiary alliance with Her Majesty.

Our relations with the tribes are not, however, in the nature of treaties guaranteeing their independence, but in the form of agreements by which, in consideration of certain payments, the Chiefs bind themselves to keep open the roads and maintain friendship with the British Government.

Indeed, with the Aulaki and Yuffai, we have only engagements in connection with the slave trade.

If, therefore, the Porte should choose to incite any of our stipendiaries to change their attitude towards us, we have no strong diplomatic position based on actual treaty rights to fall back upon, and our allies might plead that, so long as the communications with the interior are not interfered with, they have the power to accept the suzerainty of the Porte. Surely if our status on the Somali coast requires strengthening in the way of further treaties, declaring a British protectorate, such a measure is far more necessary in regard to the immediate neighbourhood of Aden.

If treaties be made with the Abdali, Fadhli, and Akrabi, by which those districts are placed under British protection, Ottoman intrigue with the Chiefs of those territories would be hardly possible. It is from the tracts inhabited by these three tribes that Aden draws all its supplies of fodder, firewood, &c.

The Abdali has absorbed the Subaihi, and in all probability, on the death of the present Akrabi Shaikh, that small clan will also pass under the Lahej Sultan.

The country of the Haushabi, which stretches across in a semicircle and reaches to the borders of the Fadhli, forms, with a small strip of Yaffai territory, a second barrier to Turkish advance. The Alawi is just beyond the Haushabi, and the so-called Amiri country is still further to the north.

The Alawi may be considered as occupying the same relative position towards us as the Haushabi, but the tribes dominated formerly by the Amirs of Zhali and the villages under those Chiefs concern us little. Were it not that their jurisdiction extends over that portion of the road to Aden which lies below the uplands as far as Alawi limits, we should probably never have sought to save Ali Mokhil from the clutches of the Porte.

Whether or not the present Amir again succeeds in obtaining back the allegiance of the villages which have passed under Ottoman rule, the tribes formerly controlled by the Chiefs of Zhali, and who occupy the vicinity of the main route to Aden from Yeman, must be dealt with.

The most troublesome of these is the Kotaibi, who have of late years taken advantage of the Amir's weakness to levy transit dues on their own account. Shortly, these and other clans, such as the Jauli and Halmeen, were feudatories of the former Amirs of Zhali, but the power and territories of the latter have been broken up by the Ottoman advance, in spite of our diplomatic endeavours to prevent the disintegration of the authority of our ancient allies.

Delimitation of the Turkish frontier is the remedy hitherto believed applicable, but, as matters now stand, this would not be so easy or, indeed, altogether adequate. Most, if not all, of the villages which have become Ottoman during the past few years, will probably prefer to remain Turkish. We cannot, and do not, protect the inhabitants of these insignificant hamlets

11585. J. 1532.



'Memorandum Regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the Vicinity of Aden,  
especially in Reference to the Amir of Zhali.' [110v] (2/4)

2

against the Amir's exactions, which are more oppressive than the tribute demanded by the Porte. The settlement of the Turkish boundary will not rid us of the necessity of dealing with the Kotaibi, and perhaps other tribes similarly situated, nay, our burden will then be heavier, for we must then support the Amir in maintaining his authority over these families.

The alternative is to cease from urging the Porte to abstain from interference with Zhali villages, and to gradually allow the absorption of the hamlets on the uplands into the Kaataba district. There need not be any formal renunciation of the Amir, but he can be invited to accept a pension for himself, and perhaps his immediate successor, on the grounds that he is unable to fulfil his treaty obligations by keeping open the roads and restraining the tribes he claims to be under his control, although he has received much material and moral support from the Aden Residency. Were it not for the dread of British intervention, Ali Mokhil's few remaining adherents would soon depose him.

The objections that can be taken to the above course are, the possible effect on other allies of our abandonment of the Amir's cause, and the possibility of Ottoman intrigues recommencing with our nearer and more important neighbours. It has been suggested above that the latter will be obviated by new treaties asserting a protectorate over those districts, and the former is more apparent than real, the other Chiefs taking little interest in the Amir's restoration.

As to the Kotaibi and other like tribes it is not believed they will find the overtaxing of the trade routes advantageous, besides we can exclude them from a share of our hospitality at Aden, and the Abdali or Haushabi chiefs will take care that the transit of merchandise is not too seriously affected, otherwise their own revenues will suffer. Moreover, the actual quantity of kafilas passing by that route is very small, and there is an alternative road. The Resident can deal with these tribes more satisfactorily once the Amir's responsibility ceases and Turkish interference is ended by the new treaties.

The following is a summary of the above proposals:—

- |   |                    |   |
|---|--------------------|---|
| (1.) New treaties to be made with the Abdali, Akrabi, and Fadhli, |                    |   |
| 1. Abdali } Now   | } Protectorate.    |   |
| 2. Subaihi } united.  |                    |   |
| 3. Akrabi }   |                    |   |
| 4. Fadhli }   |                    |   |
| 5. Haushabi }   | } Non-cession, &c. | (2.) A further agreement to be made with the Haushabi and Alowi, as also the lower Yaffai, binding those tribes not to cede, sell, give for occupation, &c., or accept the domination of any other power. |
| 6. Alowi }  |                    |   |
| 7. Yuffai, lower }  | } Independent.     |   |
| 8. Yuffai, upper }  |                    |   |
| 9. Aulaki }   |                    |   |
| 10. Amiri. Abandoned.   |                    |   |
- (3.) Cessation from demands for delimitation, and protests against the absorption of the Zhali villages by the Porte.
- (4.) Pensioning the present Amir and perhaps his son, after his death.
- (5.) Permission to the Resident to make the best possible arrangement regarding the Kotaibi, and other tribes on the east of the trade route.
- (6.) The maintenance of our present position in respect to the independence of the Aulaki and Upper Yuffai continuing intact. This bars, in some measure, Turkish progress eastward.

J. M. HUNTER, Major,  
Assistant Resident, Aden.

London, 28th September 1885.



'Memorandum Regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the Vicinity of Aden,  
especially in Reference to the Amir of Zhali.' [111r] (3/4)

MEMORANDUM by Lieutenant-General J. W. SCHNEIDER, C.B.

8, Queensborough Terrace, W.,  
1st October 1885.

I return the proof of Major Hunter's Memorandum, which he asked me to look over, showing the corrections which seem necessary.

I also send a few remarks on a separate paper, in case they should prove acceptable.

(Signed) J. W. SCHNEIDER.

There is no doubt that the position of the Amir Ali Mokhbil of Zhali has changed considerably during the past ten years. Ali Mokhbil is now unable to control the so-called Amiri territory. Internal disorders prevail there; several tribes or villages have gone over to the Turks, while others have seceded from the Amir and are acting independently. Material and moral support has been given to Ali Mokhbil, and he continues helpless to regain what he claims.

I apprehend that the British Government is not prepared to support a petty Chief by physical force against the wishes of his tribesmen, and it seems to me that the time has arrived when Ali Mokhbil might be told that, under existing circumstances, the British Government is not disposed to afford him further countenance. I should not recommend that Ali Mokhbil be "invited" to accept a pension for himself and perhaps his immediate successor. It might be sufficient to inform him that his present subsidy would be continued so long as he is recognized as Amir by a considerable portion of his tribesmen. The further continuance of his subsidy to himself or successor might rest on the course of future events.

The difficulty of delimitation of the Amiri country now consists in the accomplished fact that villages south of Zhali have of their own free will submitted to the Turks, rather than accept the Amir's authority, while others, as already observed, have seceded from Ali Mokhbil, acting as independent Shaikhs, and levying transit dues on their own account.

In ceasing to interfere with the Amir's affairs, there is of course the possibility hereafter of the Amiri territory being absorbed into the Kaataba district, and of the commencement of Turkish aggression against the Alowi, the next neighbouring Chief. The officials of the Porte might commence to dispute the right of the Alowi to some of the villages he now holds, asserting that they belonged to the Amiri territory; or it might be that intrigues would be commenced, to induce some of the Shaikhs under the Alowi to make their submission to the Porte; but this is a contingency that must of necessity be accepted, if further friction with the Porte in respect of Ali Mokhbil's claims and complaints are to be avoided.

The chief object to be kept in view is to keep the Turks on the highlands of Yemen, as distinct from the Tehamma or lowlands in the vicinity of Aden, which, I believe, may be said to almost commence from the northern boundary of the Alowi territory.

The fresh treaties and engagements with subsidized Chiefs proposed by Major Hunter will probably meet the requirements of the situation. It will be remembered that the Haushabi was the only Chief who gave trouble in 1873, by making his submission to the Porte when Turkish interference commenced with the subsidized tribes around Aden; and this only arose from a

11595. I. 1550.



**'Memorandum Regarding the Relations with the Tribes in the Vicinity of Aden,  
especially in Reference to the Amir of Zhali.' [111v] (4/4)**

4

desire to obtain an ally against the Sultan of Lahej, with whom he was at feud. It is not certain, I believe, whether the Haushabi does not even now receive a small annual subsidy from the Turks.

J. W. SCHNEIDER, Lieut.-General.

1st October 1885.