

Yemeni tribe blows up U.S. pipeline

By Ahmad Al-Haj
Of The Associated Press

SAN'A, Yemen -- Tribesmen protesting the lack of development in northern Yemen blew up a U.S.-owned oil pipeline Wednesday, officials said.

The American Hunt Oil Co. pipeline, which carries oil out of the Safer oil field in Marib province, was blown up at dawn and caught fire, company officials said. There were no reports of casualties.

It was the second attack against

Hunt in the last two weeks by members of the Jahm tribe in Marib, 105 miles northeast of the capital of San'a.

Tribal sources said they were trying to force the government to build power plants and a water distribution system in their region.

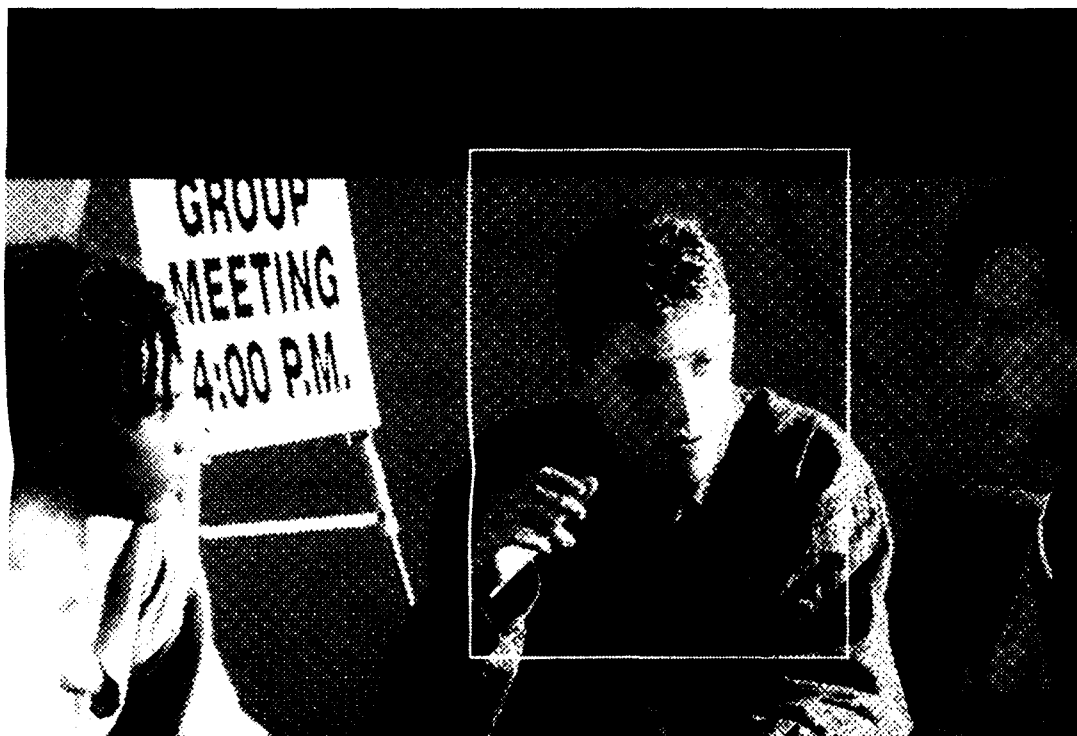
Hunt gives \$200,000 annually to the government to develop the region, but tribal leaders say they see no benefits from the money. The government says it builds schools, roads and other projects according to what is needed.

In November, Jahm tribesmen halted Hunt's drilling operations in the al-Raja oil field in Marib. A human rights group said last week that 35 Jahm tribesmen were arrested for that blast.

Large parts of Yemen are lawless, inhabited by tribes who do not hesitate to use firearms to settle scores with rivals or to express discontent with the government.

Hunt's oil field concession in Marib produces 165,000 barrels per day. The company hires 1,300 Yemeni staff.

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