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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

#52

27 JUL 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Contingency Planning for Southwest Asia (U)

(S) Pursuant to my review of our defense strategy for Southwest Asia, I want to ensure that we have adequate contingency plans to carry out that strategy.

(S) In line with JCS strategies to meet the range of potential threats to US interests in the region, I envisage three contingency levels, in addition to a Soviet attack on Iran, that may necessitate military force employment in Southwest Asia. In increasing order of importance, these are:

- employment of a small US force (e.g., battalion-size) for a situation requiring only limited combat capability (i.e., a "Mecca-type" contingency where we might be requested to intervene by the local government);

- a military response to an intraregional war which extends to the Arabian Peninsula and threatens US and allied access to Persian Gulf oil; and

- deployment of military forces to protect our vital interests in the event of gradual disintegration of Iran (e.g., Baluchistan region splits off) with no direct Soviet force involvement.

Contingency planning for a Soviet attack on Iran must also remain in line with our strategy for Southwest Asia. This planning must focus on our force capabilities in the 1981-82 timeframe, assume that bases in eastern Turkey are of limited capability and/or may not be available, and Israeli facilities would not be used unless absolutely necessary. Current contingency planning should (1) include war-widening steps to be taken against Soviet bases in the region and Soviet naval forces in a war at sea, and (2) other measures to secure our lines of communication to the region.

(S) I recognize that planning for the ~~first~~ of these contingency levels could be coordinated without the need for formal contingency planning. I would like to know, however, how the JCS would deal with such a scenario. The larger military responses,

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Persian Gulf

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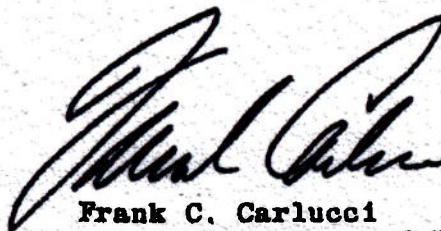
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however, related to extended intraregional conflict and events associated with a gradual disintegration of Iran appear to warrant specific contingency planning. Accordingly, I offer for your consideration the attached scenario specific guidance (Tab A) which has been prepared in accordance with the PGCP.

✓ Finally, I am aware of the considerable, ongoing contingency planning associated with the worst-case scenario of a Soviet attack on Iran. I would like to be briefed on this plan when available.

✓ In the near term, FY82-84, we should plan force movements and force deployments which are judged achievable, given current force plans, negotiations and reasonable political assumptions about the responses of various countries at a time of genuine peril.



Frank C. Carlucci
Deputy Secretary of Defense

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INTRAREGIONAL CONFLICT

I. US Regional Objectives. To insure continued access to Persian Gulf oil during periods of intraregional conflict and to support nations friendly to the United States while controlling the scope of the conflict.

II. (S) Description: Using territorial claims or an ongoing local conflict as rationale, a regional country attacks Saudi Arabia or a Saudi supported nation with preemptive attacks against Royal Saudi Air Bases in Saudi Arabia and possible ground incursions into the oil-rich northeastern portion of Saudi Arabia.

III. (S) Objectives for the Use of US Forces: In conjunction with friendly local forces to: (1) Secure Saudi and other endangered oil facilities and key bases, (2) deter and prepare to interdict Soviet intervention, (3) control military LOCs to support US forces, and (4) evacuate non-essential American non-combatants.

IV. (S) Assumptions: In addition to the basic guidance on p. 16 of the PGCP, the following assumptions apply:

- The conflict will be preceded by 30 days of rising tensions. The US will have two weeks strategic warning during which US forces may be deployed to the region and MAC will be authorized to begin positioning airlift forces.

- If the decision is made to commit ground forces, the President will call up 100,000 reservists and CRAF II will be activated by the Secretary of Defense. (NOTE: The JCS should provide to SecDef for review their recommendations for allocation by Service of the 100,000 call-up, and supporting rationale.)

- Because of deteriorating US-Soviet relations, there will be no draw down of US forces in Europe. Emergency resupply will be provided from USEUCOM contingency stocks for those items that cannot arrive in time from CONUS and that are critical to immediate mission success.

- The initial entry of US forces would be requested and would therefore be permissive. Bases in Saudi Arabia and the Saudi supported nation would be available for US forces.

- The following nations can be expected to provide friendly cooperation:

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Egypt will provide overflight, rear-area staging and POL support.

Gulf Sheikdoms. Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates will follow the Saudi lead and will permit the stationing of combat forces on their soil.

Oman will provide support of strategic airlift, bunkering of naval and commercial ships, and use of their aerial and sea ports for the throughput of cargo and resupply, if necessary.

Jordan will actively support US initiatives and permit overflight.

Israel will permit landing rights and staging areas for US forces.

All NATO countries and Spain, will permit overflight, en route basing and POL support.

France will provide unrestricted overflight only.

Iran may attempt attacks against Iraq to recover previously lost territory, independent of US action.

- Planning must take into account the possible unfriendly reactions of other nations.

Libya will provide political support to Iraq and may posture forces on the Egyptian border.

PDRY will provide political support to Iraq and may attempt to open a second front on Saudi Arabia's southern flank.

USSR will provide reluctant political support for the Iraq regime. Once US forces are committed, the USSR will begin resupply of Iraqi forces, but will not provide combat forces to Iraq.

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DISINTEGRATION OF IRAN

I. US Regional Objectives. In the event of a gradual disintegration of Iran, to counter a Soviet Union invasion of Iran and to insure continued access to the Persian Gulf.

II. Description. A gradual weakening of governmental control by the Teheran authorities in Iran, combined with significant loss of military capability as a result of the Iran-Iraq war, has led to internal instability and an impending civil war in Iran. The Soviet Union has publicly offered aid to insurgent forces in the north. Oil production continues, but at reduced levels.

III. Objectives for the use of US Forces. To deter the Soviets from intervening militarily and to forestall Soviet forces from moving to threaten allied access to Persian Gulf oil.

IV. Assumptions. In addition to the basic guidance on p. 16 of the PGCP, the following assumptions apply:

- Local regimes surrounding the Persian Gulf, including Pakistan, would be sufficiently concerned over the possibility of Soviet intervention that access to US forces would be granted. This would occur within a short time after the Soviet announcement that they were willing to assist the insurgents.

- The US would deploy forces into the Gulf states in response to Soviet reinforcements and mobilization adjacent to Iran or surrounding waters.

- If deterrence should fail, the US should be prepared to dissuade the Soviets from continuing their advance and widen the war if necessary.

- The conflict will be preceded by 30 days of rising tensions. The US will have three weeks strategic warning during which US forces will be deployed to the Indian Ocean and MAC will be authorized to begin positioning airlift forces.

- If the decision is made to commit US ground forces in Iran, the President will call up 100,000 reservists and CRAF II will be activated by the Secretary of Defense. (NOTE: The JCS should provide to SecDef for review their recommendations for allocation by Service of the 100,000 call-up, and supporting rationale.)

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- Because of deteriorating US-Soviet relations, there will be no drawdown of US forces in Europe. Emergency resupply will be provided from USEUCOM contingency stocks for those items that cannot arrive in time from CONUS and that are critical to immediate mission success.

- The following nations can be expected to provide friendly cooperation:

Egypt will provide overflight, rear-area staging and POL support.

Gulf Sheikdoms. Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates will follow the Saudi lead and will permit the stationing of combat forces on their soil.

Oman will provide support to strategic airlift, bunkering of naval and commercial ships, and use of their aerial and sea ports for the throughput of cargo and resupplies, if necessary.

Israel and Jordan will permit landing rights and staging areas for US forces.

The UK and Portugal, will permit overflight, en route basing and POL support.

- Planning must take into account the possible unfriendly reactions of other nations.

Libya will provide political support to Iran and may posture forces on the Egyptian border as US forces transit Egyptian bases.

Iraq will attempt to consolidate previous gains in Iran, while attempting to remain neutral to superpower moves.

PDRY will provide facilities access and other support to USSR.

- Ports are open, but may be subject to attack by local air forces.

- Straits of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb are open, but the possibility exists of an attempt to close them.

- The existing logistics and C³ in Iran are degraded because of civil unrest.

- No significant military support will be provided by indigenous states to US forces outside their own borders.

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