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ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

11 AUG 1982 10 17

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

11 AUG 1982

In reply refer to: I-23495/82

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

THROUGH: ~~UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (POLICY)~~

SUBJECT: Ethiopian Attack in Somalia -- INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

A. The Problem

1. In being linked with Somalia, the US faces a difficult problem. Somalia is without funds, without regional allies, without world sympathy and without support in the US Congress and in much of the Administration. However, a radical regime in Somalia would be perceived as a setback for the President's foreign policy; it would free Ethiopian resources for possible meddling in the Yemens; and, in the worst case, lead to the reestablishment of a Soviet base astride our SLOC to SWA. Hence, Somalia is of geopolitical importance.

2. The Ethiopians currently are within five miles of the North-South highway, about 150 miles north of Mogadishu. They can easily cut the road - and the country. Their objectives, however, do not appear to be military. There are no observed Ethiopian logistic buildups necessary for a sustained occupation. Instead, they seem intent on keeping pressure politically on Siad, seeking his replacement by someone accommodating to Ethiopia.

B. The Immediate U.S. Response Option

3. In the past two weeks, the US airlifted to Somalia \$5M in small arms and ammunition. An RDF military observer, BG Franklin, has reported that the next most pressing need is antiarmor - specifically, TOWs mounted on APCs. We are prepared to airlift 24 such APCs from POMCUS in Europe. It will be October, however, before trained crews will be operating them on the battlefield.

4. The APCs, equipment and lift will cost about \$20M. We propose signing LOAs based upon the FY82 Supplemental (\$10M for Somalia) and \$10M in reprogramming. Should the Supplemental not occur, we can draw upon FY83 or a Presidential Determination of an emergency under 506(a) can be requested. We would prefer not to raise the President's profile on this matter if we can fund the APCs in some other way.

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Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS
Date: JUN 04 2019

Somalia

11 Aug 82

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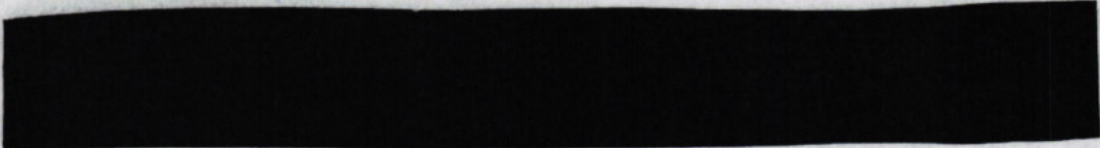
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330-84-0004, bx 22, Somalia (Fab-Dual)

5. Diversion from POMCUS is acceptable to the US Army. It does not, according to General Counsel, require a Presidential report to Congress because the numbers are slight and will be replaced within six months. Our GC warns, however, that some in Congress could challenge the GC interpretation of Presidential reporting requirements.

6. Compared to Ethiopian inventories, the APCs are a bandaid applied too late. The promise that they are coming may not uplift Somali morale. We have reports that the Somalis plan to relieve the Ethiopian pressure by raids or flying columns into the Ogaden, forcing the Ethiopians to fall back. This tactic may well succeed, given past proven Somali determination. It will also lead to fresh propaganda and accusations of Somali irredentism.

C. Other Options



8. The Somalis need more military equipment than the US can provide, given Congressional attitudes. (At a hearing on the Supplemental, Congressman Long told ASD West that the Somalis were a "despicable people.") Italy has promised at least 50 M47 tanks before year's end. We cannot verify these tanks will be in good running order, despite tentative Italian assurances. Italy does have ready for Somalia 200 light APCs, which they can deliver quickly if some nation can pay the \$60M bill.

9. We have asked MODA Sultan to assist. The Somali foreign minister also approached the Saudis last week. Result: mild sympathy but no report of hard cash.

10. Ambassador Petterson has asked State to approach the Egyptians for immediate equipment. State has not yet done so, because we are pressing Egypt about the PLO.

11. Realistically, Somalia needs \$100M or more a year in FMS to defend its ground, even conceding the air to the Ethiopians and accepting air strikes. For FY80, 81 and 82, our FMS request was \$20M; for FY83, it is \$30M. This is based on State's assessment (apparently correct) of what the Congressional traffic will bear.

12. Diplomacy as an alternative to defense has so far worked to a certain extent. Mengistu seems somewhat sensitive to media attention and to opinion in Africa, as well as to the possibility of Sudanese pressure, abetted by Egypt. Somalia under Siad may limp along. Momentum, however, favors eventual Somali accommodation on Ethiopian terms.

ASD 3.3(b)(6)

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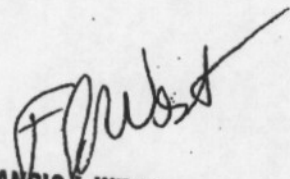
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13. On 9 August, I discussed the situation with Crocker, McFarlane and my staff. We agree on the immediate US option and the unfavorable longer-term prognosis. We will be discussing this at an interagency meeting on 11 August.

14. Saudi financing could change the outlook, if we could persuade the Saudis that it was in their interests, perhaps as partial insurance against Ethiopian troops in the Yemens.

15. When we achieve interagency agreement - and we expect it this week, we will send you a decision memorandum to move the APCs.



FRANCIS J. WEST, JR.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS)

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Office of the Secretary of Defense
Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS
Date: 04 Jun 2019 Authority: EO 13526 + 5 U.S.C. § 552
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