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7615941

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To: The Secretary
Through: P - Mr. Habibe
From: AF - William E. Schauffele, Jr.

1976 JUL 26 PM 2 27

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. Support for Kenya

A possibility exists that President Amin may order a retaliatory military strike, either ground or air, against Kenya to avenge the Israeli raid on Entebbe airport and to bolster his own prestige. The question may arise as to how the U.S. should respond to any such Ugandan action. This paper looks at some of the options.

Background/Analysis

Following the Israeli raid on Uganda's Entebbe airport on July 3/4, tensions between Kenya and Uganda greatly increased. Amin, already vengeful toward Kenya for suspected involvement in recent attempts on his life, undoubtedly would have liked to order--and may still contemplate--a retaliatory strike. Evidence of such intentions include:

-- reports of a Ugandan Defense Council discussion of such a strike which Amin favored and a large majority allegedly opposed;

-- disclosure by Somali President Siad [redacted] that Amin had unsuccessfully sought Somali collusion in military action against Kenya;

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-2-

-- indications that Amin sent envoys to Tanzania the week of July 12 to seek assurances of Nyerere's neutrality in the event of hostilities. (Reports differ as to whether the delegation was received or turned back but it is unlikely Amin got much satisfaction from Nyerere with whom he has always been on bad terms.)

In this crisis Amin's principal backing has come from Libya whose support for him dates back to 1972 when Amin--in return for expelling the Israelis and generally taking a pro-Palestinian line--got concrete Libyan aid to bolster his defenses against Tanzanian-based Ugandan exiles. Just as in 1972 when Libya dispatched some 400 troops and quantities of hardware to Amin, so in the aftermath of the Israeli raid Libya has promised to stand by Amin, specifically offering to provide replacements for the damaged planes.

Hard intelligence on actual Libyan deliveries of planes and men has been scarce, but Libya's Information Minister said in a press conference in Kuwait, July 17, that it was true Libya had provided "war planes" to Uganda. His confirmation lends credence to earlier [redacted] reports of Libyan Mirages in Uganda though the Kenyans themselves have been unable to pin down definitively the number (2 to 40) or location (plausibly placed in some reporting at Nakasongola, a northern airport, less visible to the press and public than Entebbe.) More recently the Kenyans have picked up a report of the delivery of radar and "some" troops to Uganda on two Libyan aircraft July 20, as well as word of an earlier installment of "120" troops. Some of the troops, described as both Libyan and Palestinian, would serve as bodyguards to Amin. Finally, Tripoli's local media reported on July 21 Libya's agreement to supply Uganda with a consignment of "oil products" in response to an appeal from Amin to Arab ambassadors. (Uganda has had gas rationing since July 8, and has suffered serious shortages as a result of Kenyan stoppages of rail traffic, ostensibly because of technical or fiscal problems.)

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-3-

In general, however, in the two weeks since the Entebbe raid the level of rhetoric appears to have been higher than the level of serious military preparations.

-- Despite jitters in Nairobi over Amin's intentions, Kenya's army has kept a discreet distance from the border and observed orders to avoid all provocative action.

-- On the Ugandan side, there were some troop movements toward the Kenyan border, but these appeared more likely to be reflex action than necessarily to presage an attack.

Aside from strictly military considerations, Amin's failure to move against Kenya may have been influenced by Kenya's interruption of transport to his landlocked country which served as a reminder of his current dependence on Kenya. The killings of a number of Kenyans in Uganda the week after the raid may have been viewed by Amin--whether he encouraged them or not, as at least partly in retaliation.

Since there is an obvious element of impulse and unpredictability in Amin's makeup, any judgment about his future actions toward Kenya involves certain reservations. Nonetheless, his actions usually have been considerably more cautious than his words, and he is undoubtedly aware of the serious economic and other problems that would follow a military strike against Kenya.

Given the nature of the situation and Amin's own personality, it is likely that if he felt strong enough to make a strike, he would already have done so. The fact that he has not done so yet inclines us to believe that the chances are somewhat better than even that Uganda will not initiate military action against Kenya in the immediate future. Amin has been unable, as far as we know, to garner diplomatic support for offensive action.

The passage of time, however, does introduce one major uncertainty: that Amin may be trying to organize a military strike against Kenya in the near future--say, the next few months. If so, the only logical source of the outside aid he would need is Libya, which is the big question mark in any assessment of Amin's probable course of action. Like Amin,

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-4-

Qadhafi is impulsive and his actions are often unpredictable. His past and current behavior shows an intent to help Amin keep power. It does not follow, however, that he would commit Libyan pilots or other forces in a strike against Kenya which, as an independent African government, would command OAU sympathy in the event of an attack. The chances are less than even that he will do so. But if he were to do so, the Kenyans probably would be quickly intimidated, and would feel obliged to make concessions to Uganda.

If Uganda were to undertake extensive ground force operations against Kenya, there would be certain inherent inhibitions to a widespread and extended conflict between the two countries:

-- Amin's army could seize and hold temporarily a limited portion of Kenyan territory. But it could not prevent a retaliatory Kenyan cutoff of rail traffic. Without the oil supplies that transit Kenya, the Ugandan army would come to a halt within a week or so.

-- Ugandan operations probably would be poorly executed, given the reported opposition of the majority of top ranking Ugandans on the Defense Council (mentioned above) to a Kenyan campaign; poor rank and file morale, fuel and food shortages. (Indeed only a small portion of the Army is considered to be wholly loyal and responsive to Amin.)

-- The smaller but better trained Kenyan forces could probably contain a Ugandan attack.

Faced with the prospects of a continuing threat from Amin, the Kenyans are trying to upgrade their defenses.

-- British assistance (which [redacted] would include mortars, artillery, ammunition, 400 cluster bombs and other weapons to be delivered in 50 to 60 C-130 flights) has been sidetracked for want of overflight clearances from Turkey and Ethiopia and these supplies may have to go by sea.

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-5-

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To date, in support of the Kenyans, we have sent two P-3 planes to Kenya, and scheduled two more, two ships will have called at Mombasa and a carrier task force is positioned between the Seychelles Islands and Diego Garcia. We have promised assistance to Kenya, without being specific, if it is needed.

President Nyerere called in Ambassador Spain on July 18 to say that neither Kenya nor anyone else in East Africa had any real reason to fear Amin; that both Kenya and Tanzania have the power to take care of themselves and could handle "any nonsense" Amin started - and he wasn't really going to start anything. Nyerere asked that no outsider get involved, "leave this quarrel to East Africa, we will take care of it." Foreign Minister Kaduma was going to pass this message to other Ambassadors, including the USSR one.

Ambassador Spain was instructed to tell Nyerere that the U.S. has no interest in interfering in the affairs of East Africa.

In the event of a Ugandan armed attack, Kenya is very likely to seek diplomatic as well as political recourse. In addition to calling for emergency consideration by the OAU, Kenya can be expected to inform the UN Security Council in order to retain that forum as a means of gaining more general, world-wide support. Based upon past behavior, the other Africans are likely to do their best within the OAU initially to bring about a ceasefire and a restitution of the status quo ante. In any debate in the OAU (and subsequently in the Security Council), we can expect that Uganda and Kenya will present radically different versions of events. In such a debate Uganda can be expected to seize on U.S. (or UK) military assistance to Kenya to charge foreign non-African intervention in behalf of Kenya. Embarrassing to Kenya, this argument will be very persuasive with other black African governments. Assuming Libyan assistance to Uganda, Kenya might try to use the same

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-6-

argument against Uganda. However, other black African governments are likely to consider Libya's assistance as "African" assistance and quite unlike "foreign non-African intervention."

Kenya's success in any Security Council meeting will depend upon the extent to which it has exhausted OAU remedies. If Kenya goes to the Security Council against the advice of the other African states, then it will be very difficult to get the Council to act on Kenya's behalf. If there is some representative African support for Kenya (especially by Tanzania in the SC, since Libya will certainly support Uganda), then there is a good chance that there will be the necessary votes for a pro-Kenya resolution--leaving the Soviets with the problem of whether to veto or abstain.

In the event of a Ugandan armed attack, we see our prime objective as:

-- a quick end to hostilities on terms favorable to Kenya;

-- excluding or limiting intervention by outside powers, e.g., the USSR;

-- providing the minimum U.S. support needed to prevent a Ugandan military or psychological victory.

The primary tactical issue for the U.S. is whether we should work directly with Kenyatta to ensure a successful outcome, thereby tending to highlight U.S. involvement not only to Amin but also to other members of the OAU and U.S. Congress, or whether to work in harness with the UK and perhaps others, submerging our political and military support in a collective effort.

In preparation for a decision on this issue, we should begin now to explore within the U.S. Government what types of military assistance could be provided to Kenya on an emergency basis, in the event of conflict.

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-7-

Finally, we would in any event coordinate our contingency planning with the British in view of their traditional role in the area and HMG's delicate position with respect to British subjects remaining in Uganda.

The Options in the Event of a Ugandan Attack

1. Diplomatic Support Only: Avoid direct U.S. military intervention or logistic support, but support any Kenyan diplomatic initiatives, e.g. in the UN Security Council; continue to position U.S. naval and air units in the area; and urge the UK to step up its military supply to Kenya.

Pro

-- supports Kenya without putting the U.S. out in front;

-- most likely option to avoid triggering Soviet counter-involvement;

-- the Kenyan position as the aggrieved party would be supported by western opinion and could serve to fragment OAU members in the UNSC;

-- it would draw little criticism from other Africans, the U.S. press, or Congress.

Con.

-- might be regarded as "insufficient" by Kenya;

-- the UK may decline to take the lead fearing retribution on its subjects in Uganda;

-- if the situation escalated, we could be drawn in at a later and more dangerous stage.

2. Diplomatic and Logistical Support: In addition to supporting Kenyan diplomatic initiatives, provide emergency military assistance to Kenya, either directly or in conjunction with on-going UK efforts; increase deployment of U.S. air reconnaissance

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-8-

and naval units to Kenya; take more active steps to exert pressure on Uganda. In order to implement this option most effectively, it would be necessary to have advance discussions with DOD on a range of questions involving anticipated Kenyan requirements, continuing UK assistance programs, availability of U.S. equipment, funding and transportation problems, etc.

Pro

- a stronger indication of support for and commitment to Kenya;
- shows U.S. determination to Kenya and perhaps other moderate Africans;
- from Kenyan perspective, could be optimum mix of U.S. support with least possible visibility.

Con

- could provoke criticism from radical African states, and possibly elements of the U.S. press and Congress;
- risks encouraging similar support from USSR, prolonging conflict and leading to a proxy confrontation with the USSR;

3. Diplomatic Support and Direct Intervention:
In addition to supporting Kenyan diplomatic initiatives, deploy aircraft from an Indian Ocean task force in active support of the Kenyan defense.

Pros

- this would be the strongest possible indication of our support for, and commitment to, Kenya.

Cons

- it would evoke a negative response from other African states who would regard it as an external interference in an African dispute;

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-9-

-- it could embarrass the Kenyans and diminish their potential usefulness to us over the longer term in dealing with other African states and the "non-aligned,"

-- it risks a direct U.S. confrontation with the USSR if the latter were to take similar action to support Uganda;

-- it could evoke strong criticism from the U.S. press and Congress and become a domestic political issue.

In the present situation, I believe that no decision is necessary. However, as the situation evolves, it may become prudent to develop possible U.S. responses in more detail by authorizing a study of specific diplomatic actions, types of military assistance and military operations to be considered if attack becomes imminent. This would make possible a review of all options; provide maximum flexibility for eventual decisions and actions and would enable the U.S. to tailor its response to the particular circumstances. If events so warrant, I will recommend that such a study be undertaken.

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