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# **The Northwest Indian Ocean: Regional Impact of US-Soviet Competition**

**National Intelligence Estimate**

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**THE NORTHWEST INDIAN  
OCEAN: REGIONAL IMPACT OF  
US-SOVIET COMPETITION**

Information available as of 4 November 1980 was  
used in the preparation of this Estimate.

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THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS.

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## PREFACE

This Estimate assesses the likely effects the US-Soviet strategic rivalry in the northwest Indian Ocean will have on states in that region, and the responses of those states, over the next three to five years. In this Estimate, “regional states” include countries of the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia), the Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, North Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Yemen, and the United Arab Emirates), and the Indian Ocean islands (Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, and Seychelles). The “northwest Indian Ocean” comprises these states as well as the waters and airspace of the Persian Gulf and the northwestern portion of the ocean itself. “Pro-Western” or “moderate” states—although these are imprecise terms—generally refer to all regional states except Ethiopia, North Yemen, South Yemen, Madagascar, and Seychelles. (A map of the region appears on the second page of the Discussion section.) The interests and activities of some nearby countries, such as Iraq and Iran, are discussed insofar as they affect the security problems and decisions of regional states.

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## OVERVIEW

The superpower competition in the northwest Indian Ocean overlies numerous local rivalries and instabilities that have historically subjected regional states to wars or domestic upheaval. The regional states thus assess the sharpened US-Soviet contest largely in terms of the opportunities and dangers it presents for their individual interests. The *opportunities* of alignment with a superpower are compelling:

- It provides protection and military assistance.
- It offers economic aid.

These, however, must be weighed against the dangers of such alignment:

- It aggravates internal tensions.
- It intensifies regional disputes.
- It invites countermeasures by the other superpower.

The US-Soviet rivalry has intensified a dilemma for the regional states. They feel greater need for protection because they have become more attractive targets for influence, penetration, or conquest, but most resist closer alignment with a major power for fear this would create more dangers, either foreign or domestic, than it would remove.

Some regional states nevertheless are aligning more closely with one superpower or the other. This is apt to exacerbate local conflicts. The US military buildup in Oman will provide added justification for South Yemeni subversion of the Omani Government, perhaps with Soviet encouragement. Ethiopia may respond militarily—with or without Soviet encouragement—to the establishment of a US-Somali security relationship. Somali President Siad, although he did withdraw most of his regular troops from the Ogaden, could later increase his military presence or his assistance to insurgents there. Despite the new security relationship with Somalia, the United States probably cannot persuade Siad to abandon completely his pursuit of irredentist goals.

Closer security ties with major powers could aggravate internal tensions. In some regional states, suspicions and arguments concerning the distribution and use of military and economic assistance could worsen relations between ethnic groups or between civilian and military

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leaders. In others, however, increased aid would strengthen the government. Close links with a major power would likely weaken governments in countries where resentment of foreign influence is easily aroused, particularly the island states. On balance, we believe that an augmented US and Soviet presence will not subject states in the area to internal strains great enough to topple existing regimes, although military cooperation may exacerbate existing instability.

How closely any state will cooperate with an outside power depends on how much it needs that power's economic or military support and how it gauges the repercussions of such cooperation. Oman, North and South Yemen, and the countries of the Horn of Africa probably will feel heavily dependent on foreign assistance for the foreseeable future. Even these governments will bargain hard over the concessions they grant, however, because the superpowers appear more eager than previously to obtain logistic support for their activities in the region. For the oil-producing states other than Oman, external threats or financial difficulties do not appear pressing enough to outweigh the potential internal problems of a large superpower military presence. For the time being this is also true of the island states, but with the intensified competition and increased Soviet blandishments, some of these states may later grant concessions.

US relations with Arab governments will be hindered further if the key question of a Palestinian homeland remains unresolved. The willingness of the pro-Western states of the Arabian Peninsula to cooperate militarily with the United States also is tempered by their persistent doubts about Washington's determination to respond to the Soviet challenge and by their perception of US foreign policy as inconsistent and incoherent. These states welcome the United States' recent efforts to reassert its influence in the area but view these as only first steps toward meeting Moscow's global challenge.

Alignment with a superpower appears less necessary to the regional states because of the availability of alternative sources of support. Many pro-Western states in the region would turn more closely to Western Europe for arms or economic support if new developments should cause their confidence in the United States to erode further or their relations with Washington to turn sour. Because of their concern over oil supplies as well as other commercial and strategic interests, the West Europeans will remain at least as active in the northwest Indian Ocean as they are now. They will emphasize closer diplomatic and economic relations with regional states rather than military escalation, however, because such a response is both more in line with their capabilities and, in their view, a more effective response to the Soviet challenge in the region.



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Another alternative for the poorer regional states is financial assistance from Arab oil exporters, although moderate and radical Arabs often work at cross-purposes. Saudi Arabia, the principal traditional donor, is now rivaled by Libya and Iraq. For a country chiefly worried about its physical security, moreover, financial aid cannot substitute for the military support of a major power.

The future willingness of states in the region to assist the United States or the USSR will depend in large measure on factors partly or wholly outside the superpowers' control:

- Internal political changes.
- Settlement or escalation of regional conflicts.
- Further developments in the Iranian revolution or the Iraqi-Iranian war that alter the security climate in the region.

The willingness of regional states to cooperate with a superpower will also depend on their perceptions of the overall US-Soviet balance of strength and the coherence, durability, and sensitivity of each power's foreign policy.

Moscow is likely to continue a high level of air and naval deployments in the region and will seek to use the US presence as a rationale to maintain and, if possible, increase its influence and military access in Ethiopia and South Yemen. The Soviets will also seek to fan opposition to US activity to obtain closer political relations with other regional states as well as to gain access to their naval and air facilities.

A perception that the USSR was winning the strategic competition could jeopardize the Western political and economic position in the Persian Gulf. Increased Soviet influence in Iran or sharp setbacks to Western interests in North Yemen or Oman, for example, could incline the Persian Gulf states to seek to buy protection by accommodating Soviet interests, particularly on oil policy. While the outcome of the insurgency in Afghanistan could change the regional states' perceptions of Soviet capabilities, it probably would have little effect on their judgment of Moscow's intentions. Even a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan would be unlikely to shake the moderates' belief that Moscow intends eventually to extend its control to the Persian Gulf.

Unless US credibility and capability decline a great deal further in their eyes, the pro-Western states of the northwest Indian Ocean will continue to accept a US military presence in the area as a counterweight to Soviet assets. Host states will seek to impose clear limits, however, on the size, character, location, and use of US military forces. Except for

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Somalia, these states will want to minimize the visibility of any US military presence. Saudi Arabia and other countries not permitting US combat forces on their territories will want such forces to stay over the horizon and may withhold public endorsement from military activity that they welcome in private. All pro-Western governments will be very sensitive regarding the use of US armed forces in the region for any purpose other than defense against overt aggression.

While there will be a tendency for states that establish closer security ties with Washington to support US policy across the board, stepped-up involvement in the region may adversely affect US effectiveness in the future, both in the region and elsewhere. Closer security ties with a regional state like Somalia risk identifying the United States with its client's unpopular policies. Moreover, US support for a regime that is overthrown increases the chance that the new rulers will be anti-American, as occurred in Iran. Finally, US initiatives outside the region might meet stronger opposition as an indirect result of sharper competition in the northwest Indian Ocean. In particular, the US Middle East peace policy might encounter greater resistance as Arab oil producers like Iraq and Libya, attempting to limit great-power influence in the area, increase their leverage among poorer regional states. Support for US Middle East policy could also erode among the West Europeans, who have become increasingly anxious about the security of their oil supplies and hence more inclined to back Arab positions in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

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## DISCUSSION

## US and Soviet Interests and Activity in the Region

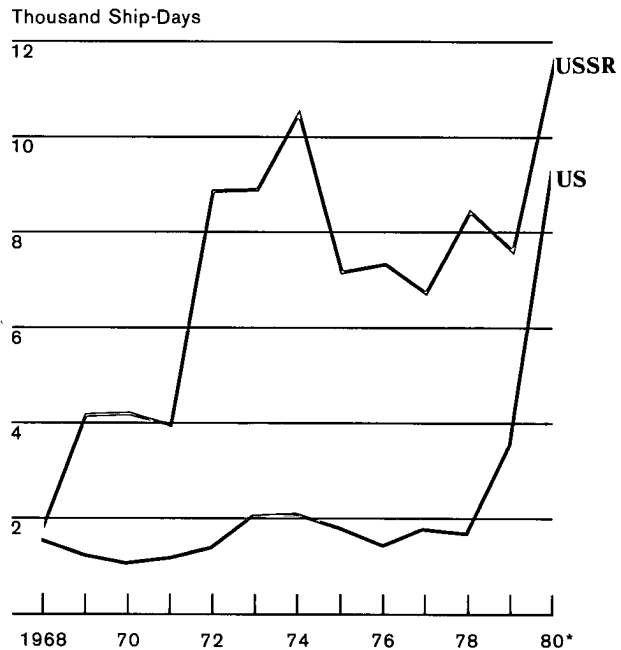
1. The USSR's interest in the northwest Indian Ocean reflects its longstanding desire to expand its presence and influence in this strategically important region (see accompanying map) as well as its more general aim of supplanting Western influence in the Third World. Moscow wants not only to impede any military use of the area that threatens Soviet interests but also to exert leverage over Western access to the region's energy resources and to gain access to air and naval facilities for its own use. Furthermore, the Indian Ocean offers the only year-round sea route between the eastern and western USSR—a particular concern to Moscow because of its conflict with China. In addition, access to Middle East oil—the primary Western interest in the region—seems likely to become important to Moscow if Soviet petroleum production begins to drop as sharply as some projections indicate.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Soviets established a continuous naval presence in the Indian Ocean in 1968 that in recent years has included about 21 units. (See figure 1.) Since late 1979, in response to the Iranian and Afghan crises and the deployment of US Navy carrier battle groups to the area, the Soviet Indian Ocean Squadron has increased to about 16 auxiliaries and 16 combat ships, including as many as four ships equipped with surface-to-surface missiles. (See figure 2.) Although the Soviets have previously augmented their naval force in the Indian Ocean during local wars—such as those between India and Pakistan in 1971, the Arab states and Israel in 1973, and Ethiopia and Somalia in 1977-78—their current sustained force level is the highest they have ever maintained in the Indian Ocean. In addition,

<sup>1</sup> There is agreement within the Intelligence Community that Soviet energy developments will have serious implications for international relations in the 1980s. There is disagreement, however, over the Soviet energy future. The Central Intelligence Agency believes that Soviet oil production will drop to 8-10 million barrels per day by 1985 and decline further by 1990. The Defense Intelligence Agency believes that the Soviet Union will not experience an energy shortage during the 1980s.

Figure 1

## US and Soviet Naval Ship-Days in the Indian Ocean, 1968-Present



\*Projections for 1980 are twice the actual figures for January-June 1980.

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tion, the Soviet naval air presence has increased from periodic deployments to the continuous deployment of up to six naval maritime reconnaissance aircraft.

3. The United States maintained a smaller continuous presence than the USSR through most of the 1970s, although a larger proportion of the US presence was combat vessels. This presence was supplemented by periodic visits of naval task forces. The US task force presence became continuous in November 1978.

4. Although the Soviet Navy uses anchorages extensively in servicing its Indian Ocean fleet, both sides have developed installations on shore to stage air mis-

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**Figure 2****US, Soviet, and French Naval Presence in the Indian Ocean, 1 August 1980**

<u>Total Ships</u>	<u>28 US</u>	<u>31 USSR</u>	<u>14 France</u>
Squadron Command Ships	0	1	0
Submarines	3	6	0
Aircraft Carriers	2	0	0
Cruisers	2	2	0
Destroyers	4	1	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Frigates	5	3	4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Patrol Craft	0	1	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
Amphibious Units	5	2	1 <input type="checkbox"/>
Minesweepers	0	1	0
Auxiliaries	7	14	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

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sions and to provide limited repair, communications, and logistic support to their ships. The USSR lost its investment in military installations in Somalia when it supported Ethiopia in the 1977-78 Ogaden war; it now uses facilities in Ethiopia and South Yemen. The United States is developing the naval support base on Diego Garcia, uses air and naval facilities in Bahrain, Djibouti, Kenya, and Oman, and has negotiated a similar arrangement with Somalia. Warships of both navies have also made port calls in other Indian Ocean states, such as Mauritius and Seychelles, for replenishment and crew rest and to show the flag.

5. This Estimate assumes that the US military presence in the Indian Ocean will include, at a minimum, permanent deployment of the five-ship MIDEASTFOR and a Marine amphibious capability, frequent visits by tactical air units, and frequent B-52 flights. It also assumes that the United States will expand and improve further the base at Diego Garcia, will seek

continued use of facilities in Bahrain and Djibouti, and will endeavor to implement the new access arrangements with Kenya, Oman, and Somalia.

6. The USSR will respond to increased US military activity to maintain its credibility as a regional power and to forestall US efforts to convert a military presence into political advantage. Moscow is likely to continue a high level of air and naval deployments in the region and will seek to use the US presence as a rationale to maintain and, if possible, increase its influence in Ethiopia and South Yemen. The Soviets will also seek to fan opposition to US activity to obtain closer political relations with regional states as well as access to their naval and air facilities.

**Local Rivalries and Instabilities**

7. The superpower competition overlies an assortment of sociopolitical problems in the northwest In-

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dian Ocean that have subjected most regional states to wars, insurgencies, or the threat of domestic upheaval. These local conflicts have a variety of specific causes. Some, including ethnic tensions and boundary disputes, would exist even in the absence of East-West rivalry. Others, such as ideological antipathy between neighboring states, are related to the East-West political competition but predate the current US-Soviet strategic rivalry in the Indian Ocean.

8. Conflict in the Horn of Africa is the continuation of a centuries-old struggle between Christian highlanders and Muslim lowlanders as well as a legacy of colonial boundaries that cut across the Somali homeland. The late 19th century expansion of Ethiopia into the Somali-inhabited Ogaden, together with the recognition of this expansion by the European powers that were then colonizing East Africa, produced an Ethiopian-Somali boundary that Somalia has never recognized. Mogadishu's irredentism and the Ogadenis' discontent with Ethiopian rule led to an insurgency in the Ogaden in 1963-64, Somalia's invasion of the region in 1977, and a new upsurge in fighting there beginning in 1979. The Ethiopian-Somali conflict makes it difficult for Djibouti to manage its relations with its two neighbors and to contain tension between its own Ethiopian-oriented Afars and Somali-oriented Issas. Kenya's relations with its northern neighbors are uneasy both because of the Somali habitation of northeastern Kenya (where an insurgency was waged in the mid-1960s) and the contrast between the capitalist and democratic ways of Kenya and the socialism and authoritarianism of Ethiopia and Somalia.

9. Tensions between states of the Arabian Peninsula stem largely from their different patterns of political development. South Yemen is ruled by a radical group whose Marxism-Leninism was annealed in its bloody struggle for independence against the British. Most of the other peninsular states are conservative monarchies, and deep distrust between them and Aden is virtually inevitable. South Yemen's involvement in armed conflict with its neighbors has included its support for the rebellion in the Dhofar Province of Oman in the 1960s and early 1970s and a border war with North Yemen in 1979. The peninsular states also have varying degrees of antipathy toward, and concern over, the states farther north that present either a military threat or a revolutionary example—Israel, Iraq, and Iran.

10. Challenges to the traditional social and political order make the internal politics of several states of the Arabian Peninsula volatile or at best uncertain. A civil war between royalists and republicans was fought from 1962 to 1970 in North Yemen, where factions associated with Saudi Arabia and South Yemen now vie for influence. The surviving monarchies on the peninsula face the problem of maintaining their legitimacy despite a lack of institutions permitting widespread political participation. These governments have used their wealth to satisfy many of their citizens' material demands, but the modernization that the oil bonanza has permitted also endangers established authority by rapidly changing social patterns and producing new classes that are educated and economically mobile but politically frustrated. Religious demands for reform and sectarian differences also contribute to the potential for internal instability, particularly among the Shia populations of Bahrain, Kuwait, and eastern Saudi Arabia.

11. Although the physical isolation of the island republics insulates them from armed conflict with neighbors, their political diversity encourages rivalry and distrust among them. Aside from Mauritius, the island states have little or no tradition of democracy, and their sharp internal divisions make their political stability questionable. The toppling of the Comoran government in 1978 by a small band of European mercenaries demonstrated both the fragile basis on which these regimes rest and the possibility of foreign involvement in extralegal transfers of power.

12. Because of the diversity of conflicts, both domestic and external, in the northwest Indian Ocean, few generalizations about local security problems apply throughout the region. The effects of the sharpened superpower competition on local rivalries and internal instability will inevitably be variable and complex. In some cases these effects are major, but the course of many other conflicts in the region will be determined less by US and Soviet actions than by the policies of regional states and by the longstanding political, economic, and religious divisions that generated these disputes in the first place.

### Perceptions of the Superpower Competition

13. Given the many local security concerns in the northwest Indian Ocean, regional states assess the sharpened US-Soviet competition largely in terms of

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the opportunities and dangers it presents for their individual interests. North Yemen is exploiting the US-Soviet rivalry, trying to wheedle more arms and economic aid from both powers in an effort to increase its independence from Saudi Arabia. At the moment, other governments are not working both sides of the street but nevertheless exaggerate their alarm over the activities of one superpower, even in distant areas, to stay in favor with the other. Kenyan leaders, for example, have little interest in events outside East Africa but express concern over Soviet inroads in Southwest Asia partly as a way of soliciting US aid. Most regional states, however, worry that their interests will receive short shrift as each superpower becomes preoccupied with parrying the other's moves. In particular, the Saudis and other Arab states fear that US efforts to counter the Soviet threat will delay progress on the Palestinian issue and lead to increased US military aid to Israel.

14. Most states in the region expect the US-Soviet strategic competition in the northwest Indian Ocean to continue unabated for the foreseeable future. Most conservative states on the Arabian Peninsula interpret the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the earlier Soviet inroads in South Yemen and the Horn of Africa as confirming their view that Moscow intends eventually to control the Peninsula and the Persian Gulf. Formerly believing that the Soviets would use clandestine means to accomplish this objective, many conservatives in the area now are convinced that Moscow is prepared to move overtly as well. Even the pro-Soviet regimes in Ethiopia and South Yemen, although they naturally feel less threatened by the Soviet activity, share the concerns of others that the US-Soviet military buildup in the region will upset local balances of power.

15. The pro-Western states of the Arabian Peninsula, however, have persistent doubts about Washington's determination to meet the Soviet challenge and to protect its own interests and those of its friends. Many rulers believe that the United States was tardy in perceiving and countering the Soviet threat to their region. The confidence of these states was further eroded by the fall of the Shah of Iran, which seemed to indicate that American ability or willingness to aid a beleaguered ally, even one as important to US strategic interests as the Shah, is seriously limited. These governments also believe that US foreign policy has been incoherent and inconsistent, a belief rooted in what

they see as a US failure to formulate effective policy on economic problems like energy and inflation and other global issues.

16. Most pro-Western states welcome Washington's recent efforts to reassert its influence in the area as signs that it finally is shaking off the effects of the Vietnam trauma and henceforth will be less reluctant to assume overseas commitments. Nevertheless, they view such evidence of US concern as only a step in the right direction. Military arrangements alone will not restore US credibility. Many leaders still wonder whether renewed American interest in the region is attributable more to the presidential election campaign than to a determination to protect what they perceive to be US interests there. Rescue of the Tehran hostages might have enhanced further the moderates' confidence in US will, but the failure of the rescue mission instead raised doubts about US military capability.

## Challenges to Regional States

### Pressures Toward Alignment

17. The northwest Indian Ocean states believe that the strategic competition in their region has made them even more attractive targets for influence, penetration, or conquest. Although most of these states prefer that neither the United States nor the USSR maintain military forces in the area, the support of a friendly power to deter or defeat threats to their security seems more important than before. The strategic competition thus has made the region more polarized as Kenya, Oman, and Somalia negotiate new security ties with the United States while Ethiopia and South Yemen maintain or strengthen their ties with the USSR.

18. A close security relationship with a superpower appears to raise a variety of foreign and internal dangers, however. This is why the island republics and the Persian Gulf states other than Oman have eschewed such links so far. (See accompanying table.) Pro-Western Arab states are concerned that an overt security relationship with the United States would lead to subversion of their governments by expatriate Palestinians. They also have a nagging suspicion that the United States might use military facilities such as those in Oman as staging bases to seize the oilfields. Another serious problem in the eyes of many governments is that aiding the military activity of one superpower

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### Current Use of Facilities in the Northwest Indian Ocean by Foreign Military Forces

Includes both continuous and intermittent deployments of warships, military aircraft, and ground combat troops.

	US Forces	Soviet Forces	Other Foreign Forces	Remarks
Bahrain	Limited use of port; re-supply flights	None	None	
Comoros	None	None	None	No known restrictions but facilities not in demand
Djibouti	Regular port calls and naval reconnaissance flights	Recently made first combat ship visit	France stations 4,000 troops and air units and uses as home port for its Indian Ocean fleet	
Ethiopia	None	Regular ship use of Dahlak; occasional ship visits to Massawa; reconnaissance flights from Asmara; development of Assab airfield	10,000 to 13,000 Cuban troops	
Kenya	Port calls at Mombasa; use of Mombasa and Nairobi airfields; agreement for expanded use	None	United Kingdom makes port calls and holds joint land exercises	
Kuwait	Occasional port calls and refueling stops	None	West Europeans make occasional port calls	
Madagascar	None	None	None	Declared policy of excluding all foreign military forces
Maldives	Port calls at Male	Port calls at Male	West Europeans make occasional port calls at Male	Military facility at Gan remains closed
Mauritius	Port calls at Port Louis	Port calls at Port Louis	West European port calls at Port Louis	
North Yemen	None since 1978	Squadron flagship recently made port call	None	
Oman	Port calls at Matrah; periodic use of Jazirat Masirah airfield and As Sib (Seeb) airport; agreement for expanded use	None	United Kingdom makes port calls and uses as training area	
Qatar	Occasional port calls	None	West Europeans make occasional port calls	
Saudi Arabia	Rare port calls	None	None	
Seychelles	Limited use of Victoria port	Limited use of Victoria port	Limited French use of Victoria port	New restrictions limit number of ship and aircraft calls and prohibit nuclear-powered or nuclear-armed ships.
Somalia	Periodic naval visits; agreement for expanded use	None since 1977	Occasional French naval visits	
South Yemen	None	Regular naval use of Aden port, Socotra and Perim; regular air use of Aden airport		
United Arab Emirates	Occasional port calls	None	Occasional West European port calls	



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makes it more difficult to accommodate the other and may stimulate a hostile response. In sum, alignment and accommodation both have become more important, but pursuit of one undermines the other.

19. Military cooperation with an outside power also contradicts the Indian Ocean states' often-stated objectives of nonalignment and the exclusion of major power influence and rivalry from the region. Most of these states wish to do nothing to increase the chance of a superpower conflict in their backyard, in which their own interests would suffer at least as much as those of Moscow or Washington. The new tide of Islamic sentiment has further strengthened prejudice against reliance on outside powers. Arab governments in particular envision the Islamic world—and more narrowly, the Arab world—as an independent power center speaking with one voice. East-West polarization in the region makes realization of this dream less probable.

20. Overt alignment with a major power exposes a regime to criticism in wider Third World forums like the nonaligned movement, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Islamic Conference, and the Arab League. This can cause embarrassment, although two of the regimes seeking closer ties with the United States have little influence to lose. Sultan Qaboos of Oman already has isolated himself from the Arab consensus through his support of Egyptian President Sadat's peace diplomacy. Somali President Siad Barre's stock in OAU circles never has been high, because he has irredentist ambitions and offers only tepid support for popular African causes like majority rule in southern Africa. Kenya, however, is concerned about avoiding isolation from the mainstream of African and non-aligned opinion. Third World sentiments are unlikely to deflect Nairobi from its present course, but they have made Kenyan leaders more sensitive to the publicity given to, and the character of, any US military presence on their territory.

#### Exacerbation of Local Conflicts <sup>2</sup>

21. Intensified US-Soviet competition is pushing some northwest Indian Ocean states into closer rela-

<sup>2</sup> Although it falls outside the scope of this Estimate, the Arab-Israeli dispute also may be affected by the US-Soviet competition in nearby regions, including the northwest Indian Ocean.

tions with a superpower, raising fears among their neighbors and revising local military balances. This is apt to aggravate some local tensions and to increase the chances of border clashes and externally sponsored subversion.

22. The establishment of a US-Somali military relationship, which Ethiopia probably expects to embolden Siad to push Somali claims in the Ogaden, could result in escalation of hostilities between Ethiopia and Somalia. Ethiopia has hinted it may respond to US military aid for Somalia by striking against Somali facilities at Berbera or elsewhere, and its air attacks on Somali military facilities during recent months have served to make this threat more credible. The USSR, concerned over international criticism and possible US counteractions, has threatened to withdraw its aid if Ethiopia invades Somalia at this time. Nevertheless, Ethiopia will likely use a combination of further air attacks, small-scale cross-border ground operations, and increased activity by Somali Salvation Front guerrillas to pressure Somalia and the United States. Over the longer term, a major Ethiopian invasion of northern Somalia, to include the occupation of Hargeisa and possibly Berbera, is a distinct possibility. Addis Ababa would see such an action as a means to unseat Siad and permanently solve the Ogaden problem.

23. In approving a military access agreement with the United States, Siad promised withdrawal of regular Somali forces from the Ogaden. This does not, however, preclude a future increase in the Somali military presence there. Neither does it rule out continued or even increased support by Mogadishu to the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) and possibly to Eritrean and other non-Somali separatists in Ethiopia. In the past, Somalia has reduced its involvement in the Ogaden for political reasons or when its military forces were weak, only to revise this policy at an opportune time.

24. In response to Washington's efforts over the past three years to condition US military aid on a reduction of his support to the WSLF, Siad made it clear he would continue to back the guerrillas. Even with a close security relationship, the United States probably cannot persuade Siad to abandon pursuit of his irredentist goals, any more than the USSR could keep him from invading Ethiopia in 1977. Siad can be expected to test the limits of US tolerance of further Somali involvement in the Ogaden.

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25. Intensification of the Ethiopian-Somali conflict probably would affect Djibouti as well, both by disturbing its economy and by stirring up the internal conflict between Afars and Issas. The balance Djibouti has sought to maintain in its relations with its two larger neighbors could easily be upset, particularly if French forces were withdrawn. Djibouti recently improved its relations with Ethiopia, while Somalia has begun limited support to Issa dissidents—a reversal from previous months, when Djibouti tilted toward Somalia and Ethiopia provided substantial aid to Afar dissidents. Ethiopia apparently concluded that the recent extensive US use of Djibouti facilities was not directed against itself and was preferable to a US military relationship with Somalia. Formalization of Washington's military ties with Djibouti could cause Addis Ababa to revise its assessment and to resume support to the Afars.

26. Although Somalia also has designs on Somali-inhabited portions of Kenya, US military aid to Siad would not ignite open conflict between the two countries. In fact, Kenya hopes that a US presence will moderate Siad's behavior, which is why Kenyan leaders privately accept a US-Somali relationship despite their deep fear of Somali irredentism. Siad may become more flexible toward Kenya in order to please the United States and other potential Western benefactors, but his refusal to renounce claims to Kenyan territory will mean continued distrust between his government and Nairobi.

27. The formalization of Kenya's ties with the United States will not lead to hostilities between Kenya and its neighbors. Even with increased shipments of US arms, Kenya will be too militarily weak to pose a significant threat to other East African countries. Despite Ethiopia's suspicions of US intentions in the region, Kenyan-Ethiopian military cooperation does not appear to have suffered. Addis Ababa probably interprets Kenya's ties with the United States as a continuation of its traditional pro-Western orientation and not as directed against itself. Over the long term, however, ideological differences and Ethiopia's clear military superiority will work to cool bilateral relations.

28. Greater superpower activity in and around the Arabian Peninsula may aggravate the already strained relations between South Yemen and Oman. Oman has long feared Aden's attachment to the USSR, while South Yemen wishes ultimately to topple Sultan Qaboos. South Yemen has recently indicated, both

publicly and privately, its growing concern over the US military buildup in Oman. A continuing American military presence provides a convenient justification for Aden—alone or in addition to other radical Arab states and perhaps the USSR—to increase subversion of Oman.

29. Leaders of the island states fear that the sharpened competition in the Indian Ocean will make them targets of foreign-sponsored subversion as each side tries to install governments more willing to support its activity in the region. The pro-Western island regimes are concerned about Soviet interference in their internal politics. Mauritian leaders are correct in their belief that the Soviets have long provided guidance and financial support to the main opposition party, the Mauritian Militant Movement. The left-leaning island presidents—Ratsiraka of Madagascar and, even more so, Rene of Seychelles—fear that France, South Africa, or the United States will support attempts by mercenaries or underground opposition groups to topple their governments, similar to the 1978 coup in Comoros. Regardless of whether such fears are well founded, the island governments may respond to them in ways more likely to escalate the strategic competition than to dampen it. Rene, for example, requested additional port calls by Soviet warships last year as a show of support from Moscow when he believed an externally mounted coup was imminent.

#### Internal Strains

30. Even without foreign meddling, the heightened strategic rivalry will stretch the political and social fabric of several northwest Indian Ocean states, particularly those entertaining a new or enlarged foreign military presence.

31. Increased military and economic assistance, although it augments the resources available for satisfying internal demands, may in some countries aggravate tensions between ethnic groups or between civilian leaders and military officers. The Afars of Djibouti believe that the Issa-dominated government intends to use foreign-made arms to suppress their agitation for social and economic equality. Further military aid from any source to the Gouled regime thus may stimulate additional Afar unrest with or without encouragement from Ethiopia. In Somalia, animosity between Siad's fellow Marehans and other tribes would increase if the benefits of a US aid relationship seemed to flow disproportionately to the Marehans.

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Disaffected non-Marehans would tend to believe this whether it were true or not. Substantial US military aid to Somalia probably would placate restive Somali military officers. Elsewhere, however, a large infusion of weapons and supplies might strengthen and embolden the military and eventually encourage it to take power. This is a long-term risk of major military aid to Kenya, where ethnic tension and grumbling about the Moi regime recently have increased within the usually apolitical military, but it is a risk the civilian leaders probably will be able to contain.

32. Superpower activity in the region will alter, in a similarly complex manner, the political influence of pro-Western or pro-Soviet factions in several countries. On one hand, military aid to a rival state can reduce the influence of political figures associated with the aid giver. In particular, establishment of a US-Somali military relationship could undercut residual pro-Western elements within the Ethiopian Government. They would have difficulty rationalizing Washington's provision of arms to Somalia while the latter continues its support to the Ogaden insurgency. On the other hand, military aid often will strengthen the aid giver's friends in the recipient state. Libya's gifts of military equipment to Djibouti, for example, persuaded some Djiboutians that they need not restrict their friendship to France, the United States, and the moderate Arabs. In a state that traditionally has been less dependent on foreign security ties, however, military cooperation with an outside power would more likely add to the government's political burdens by stimulating nationalist sentiment. This is particularly true in Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles, where important domestic political lines pit a generally pro-Western group against one favoring the East. As the leaders of these states undoubtedly realize, closer ties with a superpower would furnish a convenient issue to the opposition, which could call for the ouster of an apparently foreign-dominated government.

33. Domestic politics in the three states where the United States has negotiated access arrangements do not divide in the same way, but opposition leaders in those countries could exploit military cooperation with the United States by appealing to popular resentment of foreign influence, although this is doubtful in Kenya. Sultan Qaboos of Oman is especially vulnerable because of discontent over his reliance on British advisers to run the armed forces and some government

departments. Younger Omani officials feel their own advancement has been blocked, and they believe the foreigners are lining their pockets and promoting the interests of their home government rather than those of Oman. Military assistance from Washington would heighten resentment if it appeared to increase corruption or if absorption of new materiel became a pretext to delay further the Omanization of the armed forces.

34. An augmented US military presence at the levels currently projected should not, by itself, subject pro-Western states in the northwest Indian Ocean region to internal strains great enough to topple current regimes. Military cooperation may exacerbate existing instability, however, and in most cases the size, character, and associated benefits of a US military presence will be important in determining its effect on internal politics. US-Somali ties probably will strengthen Siad Barre's internal position, mainly by enhancing his support within the predominantly anti-Soviet military establishment. Siad could encounter new opposition from military officers if the United States failed to fulfill their expectations of assistance. Kenya is one of the few stable countries in Africa, and the projected small US military presence is unlikely to alter this. Neither should limited and discreet use of Omani facilities seriously endanger the tenure of Qaboos, who is popular for having ended his father's oppressive rule and instituting social and economic reforms. If alienation among key elements of the Omani military increases, however, the issue of dependence on foreign powers would become an increasingly troublesome one for him. The other moderate Persian Gulf states, by avoiding a foreign military presence on their territories, are relatively less affected by the US-Soviet strategic competition. Their future stability is uncertain, but this is chiefly a question not of ties with outside powers but of their ability to manage the social and political changes caused by the influx of oil wealth.

35. Although the Soviets are targets of some popular resentment in Ethiopia and South Yemen, their presence is unlikely to weaken the internal position of either country's current regime as long as tensions with neighboring states persist. Potential opposition elements recognize a military need for that presence despite any dislike they may have for Soviets on their soil. Particularly for Ethiopia, no alternative source of

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support—even one that a more moderate successor to the Mengistu regime might tap—appears able and willing to provide military help comparable to that given by the USSR and Cuba. Furthermore, Soviet penetration of both countries already is so deep that would-be coup plotters probably are discouraged by the prospect that Moscow would attempt to prevent, forcibly if necessary, any change of regime not to its liking.

36. Of the other countries in the region, the strategic competition has indirectly exacerbated the inherent internal instability in Djibouti and North Yemen, each of which attempts to walk a tightrope between antagonistic neighbors, competing domestic groups, and sometimes East and West. President Gouled should be able to contain unrest in Djibouti for the time being with the assistance of French security forces, but the competition in military aid begun by Libya has enlarged both the suspicions of the Afars and the ambitions of radical elements in the government and army. In North Yemen, President Salih's dangerous game of playing his suitors off against each other could contribute to his eventual overthrow by elements associated with either Saudi Arabia or South Yemen.

### Factors Shaping Relations With the Superpowers

37. Alignments of regional states with outside powers generally reflect long-established cultural and economic relationships, ideological preferences, or searing historical experience. Oman and the other conservative Arab countries are economically wedded to the West and see Communism as implacably hostile to their social order and way of life. Kenya considers its pro-Western orientation to be consistent with its free-enterprise economy and relatively open political system. Somalia does not share these values but is anti-Soviet by virtue of its earlier unhappy relationship with the USSR. The Soviets' heavyhandedness and racism, and later their support to Ethiopia and refusal to back the 1977 invasion of the Ogaden, left a legacy of ill will in Somalia that would limit severely how far any Somali leader could go in improving relations with Moscow. The Soviet clients, Ethiopia and South Yemen, both feel far more ideologically compatible with the USSR than with the West. They have declared themselves to be Marxist-Leninist and generally are following Communist models in both their internal and external policies.

### Military and Economic Support

38. While the direction of a state's alignment usually reflects historical or cultural ties, the degree to which it cooperates with a superpower is largely a question of how dependent it is on that power's economic aid, arms, or promise of military protection. This dependence in turn is a function of perceived threats and an inability to pay for economic or military development.

39. The deep security concerns and poverty in the Horn of Africa make all states of the Horn willing to permit US or Soviet use of their military facilities. Equipment needed to wage war in the Ogaden (and for Ethiopia, on other fronts as well) is the most important benefit Mogadishu and Addis Ababa hope to gain from security ties with a superpower. As long as the Ogaden conflict is unresolved, arms will continue to be the primary concern of each. Djibouti is almost totally dependent on foreign support for its security. Kenya sees security problems along most of its borders, and it relies on ties with friendly Western powers to obtain not only arms and training for its armed forces but also the implicit promise of military intervention should these forces prove to be inadequate. Nairobi also hopes to profit economically from its expanding relationship with the United States.

40. South Yemen's cooperation with the Soviets reflects its heavy military dependence on Moscow. It needs a foreign underwriter for almost all of its efforts to maintain its defenses against the nearby conservative states, especially Saudi Arabia, that it distrusts so deeply. Aden's relationship with Moscow in turn makes Oman's Qaboos feel even more dependent on Western support for his security and thus has heightened his interest in expanded military and economic ties with Washington.

41. Although most other states in the region are economically or militarily dependent on the United States or the USSR to some degree, they will be unwilling to entertain foreign armed forces on their territories as long as external threats do not appear immediate enough to outweigh the potential internal problems of a foreign military presence. Other Persian Gulf states, for example, are less exposed than Oman to attack from a hostile neighbor but more vulnerable to unrest by Shia militants or Palestinian radicals within their own borders. US military forces on their soil thus would aggravate—not alleviate—their most pressing

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security concerns, while their oil wealth makes foreign financial subsidies unnecessary.

42. Even heavy dependence on a major power's support will not by itself impel a government to grant concessions it does not consider in its own interest, for it will try to exploit whatever counterleverage it enjoys. The strategic competition has increased the bargaining power of almost all regional states by making the superpowers appear more eager than ever for diplomatic as well as logistic support for their activities in the area.

#### The Palestinian Issue

43. The present US position on the Palestinian question significantly limits the willingness of even the most pro-Western Arab governments to cooperate militarily with the United States. For the Saudis and other Arab conservatives, Washington's handling of this issue has become a litmus test of US fairness and sensitivity to their own problems and interests.

44. These governments believe that US Middle East peace policy has failed to address the Palestinian problem adequately, thereby perpetuating the greatest threat to regional stability. They believe the Camp David accords have dangerously polarized Arab politics, neutralized Egypt as a moderating force, stimulated terrorism, and given the Soviets an opportunity to recoup lost influence. Furthermore, it has placed Arab moderates on the defensive and made it more difficult and politically hazardous for them to cooperate with the United States.

45. Failure to achieve a breakthrough on the Palestinian issue in the near future could lead to serious new strains in relations with the Arab moderates and to abandonment of Saudi Arabia's efforts to keep the Palestinian question separate from US-Saudi bilateral affairs. Besides making military cooperation with Washington even more politically dangerous for the moderates, the belief that the United States had failed to exert adequate pressure on Israel would intensify the already widespread impression of a US inability to act wisely and resolutely in the region.

#### Alternative Sources of Support

##### Other Western Powers

46. Western Europe is, after the United States and the USSR, the most promising source of external sup-

port for most northwest Indian Ocean states. West European governments consider this area, which has historically been a European sphere of influence, strategically important enough to justify substantial efforts to promote stability there and to nurture closer relations with key regional states. European interest in the region recently has been rising, largely because of worries sparked by the Iranian revolution and Moscow's invasion of Afghanistan. The primary concern is the security of oil supplies, including both the producing areas of the Persian Gulf and the tanker routes linking the gulf to Europe. The northwest Indian Ocean also provides access to the Suez Canal, which is reassuming much of its traditional importance as a passage for dry cargo between Europe and the Far East and, with the Canal's recent expansion, for oil as well. In addition, European interest in the area is linked to a concern over Soviet influence in Africa.

47. France maintains a continuous Indian Ocean naval force of about 14 ships, which for years was the largest such force from a Western country. (See figure 2.) The fleet is supported from bases in Djibouti—  
and on Reunion and Mayotte. France is able and probably willing to increase this force temporarily, as it did following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It will continue to use its Indian Ocean squadron flexibly, but it could not expand its naval presence in the region permanently and significantly unless it curtailed its activity in the Mediterranean and the central Atlantic.

48. The United Kingdom retains a military relationship with Kenya, where joint exercises are held, and provides leadership and technical assistance to Oman's armed forces. It maintains a small naval support element at Diego Garcia and periodically deploys naval task forces to the Indian Ocean. The British are laying plans for a limited intervention force but probably will not be able to increase their presence substantially until at least the mid-1980s—and even then a significantly expanded British role in the area is doubtful. Their commitment to critical NATO roles and to security in Northern Ireland will make it difficult to augment their military activity in the Indian Ocean beyond modest increases in advisers, exercises, and port calls.

49. The Dutch have dispatched token naval contingents to the Indian Ocean every two or three years but are unlikely to do more. West Germany recently sent

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its first combat vessels there on a training cruise. Bonn will be very cautious about projecting armed forces outside Europe, however, lest it trigger alarm over a resurgent German military. The proposal by the conservative West German opposition to extend NATO's purview to the Persian Gulf was rejected by the government, and the idea is now moribund.

50. The only other Western state militarily active in the Indian Ocean is Australia, which responded to the invasion of Afghanistan by offering to assist the United States in monitoring Soviet activity in the region. This assistance will include added surveillance flights and naval patrols by Canberra's own forces as well as enhanced US access to Australian facilities. Australia's objective is to encourage the United States to accept most of the Western defense burden in the area. It does not aspire to become an "Indian Ocean power" or, even less, a protector of the states in the western part of the region, with which it does not have close relations.

51. The West Europeans will limit their military response because of budgetary constraints, their desire to maintain defenses closer to home, and the hazards they associate with a military approach to problems in the Indian Ocean. One of the hazards they fear is damage to detente in Europe. They also are wary of bolstering the Western military presence in the Indian Ocean if this appeared to lead only to another cycle of stepped-up deployments to the region. Furthermore, they are skeptical that the United States, which would have to shoulder the heaviest part of the military burden in countering Soviet moves in the region, is capable of doing so. The West Europeans believe that cultivation of good relations with the regional states—including Ethiopia—through aid and diplomacy would more effectively protect Western interests in the area. This approach, they believe, avoids the dangers of military confrontation and capitalizes on anti-Soviet sentiment that the invasion of Afghanistan aroused in many Islamic and other nonaligned countries.

52. In sum, augmentation of military resources in the northwest Indian Ocean will be only a small part of a balanced West European response to sharpened competition in the region. The Europeans might be willing, if events warranted, to reinforce their naval and military assets in the area somewhat and would probably accept some coordination among themselves and with the United States (although not within an

alliance framework) to increase their effectiveness in a crisis. Most allies, particularly West Germany, prefer an increased "division of labor," however, whereby their own defense efforts would be concentrated in Europe while the United States diverts military resources to the Indian Ocean. They also will show interest in schemes designed to "stabilize" foreign activity in the Indian Ocean, perhaps even listening to Soviet proposals of this type. Meanwhile, the Europeans will nurture their bilateral ties with the oil-producing states.

53. Most Europeans believe their main asset in the Indian Ocean region is not military force but rather influence based on economic, cultural, and political ties. They also believe they are better able to influence the Arab states for having increased their distance from US policy on the Palestinian issue. France and the United Kingdom in particular have retained links with most of their former colonies. At times, the colonial experience seems more of a liability than an asset as many countries become more intent on avoiding neocolonialism or the appearance of it. In the Indian Ocean archipelagoes, this experience also left a legacy of territorial grievances involving islands remaining under European administration (including the claims of Mauritius to Diego Garcia and of Comoros to Mayotte). Furthermore, European aid programs have their share of friction and distrust—most notably in Djibouti, where the Gouled government is unhappy with the pace of French military and financial aid and Paris is displeased by Djibouti's receptivity to Libyan overtures. Nevertheless, several regional states rely on Western Europe enough for aid or commerce that they would be reluctant to take steps, particularly overt alignment with the Soviets, that would jeopardize these relations. The island republics in particular depend heavily on Western Europe for development aid, investment, purchase of agricultural products, and foreign exchange from tourism.

54. For the time being, most pro-Western regimes on the Arabian Peninsula will continue to look to the United States as the power ultimately most capable of defeating serious threats to their security. Further erosion of confidence in the United States or a souring of relations with Washington, however, would lead most of them to turn first to other Islamic countries or Western Europe for additional arms or other types of security assistance. If these countries become increasingly disenchanted with US Middle East policy, they

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probably would look more and more to Western Europe not only for weapons but also for intercession with Washington to change its stance on the Palestinian issue—overtures to which the Europeans may be increasingly responsive. Existing European security arrangements with individual states in the region, including those of the United Kingdom with Kenya and Oman (despite plans for Omanization of the armed forces) and of France with Comoros and Djibouti, probably will continue as long as the present regional regimes remain in power.

#### Arab States

55. Most northwest Indian Ocean states would welcome support from other Third World countries as being more consistent with nonalignment than reliance on a superpower or its allies would be. Although Third World states cannot match the superpowers' ability to manufacture arms or project military force, the Arab oil exporters have a natural resource that is vital to other regional states and that has made the exporting countries wealthy enough to bestow economic aid and finance foreign purchases of weapons. They also have sufficient interest in the region to use their aid to compete vigorously for influence there, particularly in Arab League states.

56. Because of their ideological differences, they often compete with each other. Djibouti and Somalia are principal intra-Arab bones of contention. In the former, Libya and Iraq are trying to wean the Gouled regime from Western arms and aid while France and Saudi Arabia use their support to try to keep it in the moderate camp. In Somalia, Arab hardliners led by Iraq have put heavy pressure on President Siad to observe Arab League sanctions against Egypt, which Siad has resisted in order to preserve his military supply relationship with Cairo. One of Siad's chief Arab patrons—Saudi Arabia—so far has not pressured him to follow the Arab consensus, evidently considering it more important to keep Soviet influence out of Somalia and to maintain Mogadishu's military position against Marxist Ethiopia.

57. The US-Soviet competition in the area is stimulating Arab donors to make new offers of aid in an effort to keep regional states out of the embrace of a superpower, particularly a hostile one. Iraq has been particularly active in expanding its relations with, and offering assistance to, numerous states in the northwest

Indian Ocean region. The prospect of US access to Somali facilities apparently led Iraq and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to offer financial assistance to Mogadishu. Kuwait and the UAE reportedly planned to use aid to dissuade Oman from granting military facilities to the United States, and Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states may offer assistance to South Yemen once again as an inducement to leave the Soviet orbit.

58. Arab resentment against the intrusion of foreign military forces in Arab lands—expressed in Iraq's proposed Pan-Arab "charter" barring foreign military forces from Arab soil—could mean some reductions in aid to states that expand security ties with a major power. Most Arab donors, however, will conclude that the sharpened strategic rivalry makes flexible and imaginative use of their oil and money more important than ever. They often will see continuation of assistance in their own interest even if they dislike many policies of both the recipient and the major power with which it cooperates. In particular, Saudi Arabia's distaste for the secular and socialist aspects of Siad Barre's regime does not preclude continued Saudi aid to Somalia, although recent relations between Riyadh and Mogadishu have been cool.

59. For countries worried about their physical security, oil money cannot substitute for the military support of a major power. Governments whose most pressing concerns are financial rather than military, however, will be more likely to rely on Arab aid. The island republics may seek such assistance to better resist the blandishments of major powers desiring use of their ports and airfields.

#### Regional Cooperation

60. Strategic competition in the northwest Indian Ocean probably will stimulate new attempts to enhance cooperation among states in the region. The objectives would be to counter pressures toward alignment, to facilitate mutual assistance, and to harmonize demands for the exclusion of great-power rivalry from the area. The very tensions and polarization that such schemes would be designed to counteract, however, are reducing further what already were poor prospects for significant new intraregional arrangements.

61. The island republics constitute one obvious regional group, but their disparate domestic politics, different interpretations of nonalignment, and some un-

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resolved interisland quarrels probably will preclude formation of anything approaching an alliance that embraces them all. The relatively like-minded regimes in Seychelles and Madagascar, which have cooperated militarily, could conclude a defense agreement. Nevertheless, both governments realize they cannot furnish each other much help and would still look elsewhere for military and economic support.

62. Cooperation among the Arab states of the Persian Gulf should be aided by their common ethnic heritage and the potent dream of Arab unity, but this goal has always eluded them. The gulf states have an aspiring leader in Iraq, and Baghdad's qualifications to fill this role have grown along with its increasing economic and military strength, its enhanced influence in the nonaligned movement, the ostracism of Egypt in Arab councils, and the fall of the Shah and the resulting deterioration of Iran's armed forces. Iraq has endeavored to become more acceptable to the conservative gulf states by moderating its more extreme rhetoric and demonstrating its independence from the USSR. Baghdad has used the war with Iran to further its claim to leadership of the gulf states by posing as a defender of the "Arab nation" against the "Persians" and demanding, as a condition for peace, return to the UAE of gulf islands seized by the Shah.

63. The regional US-Soviet military rivalry touched off by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan directly challenges the Iraqi ambition. In particular, Baghdad sees a US-Omani security relationship as preempting its own effort to succeed the Shah as protector of the lower gulf states. Iraq's response has been vehement denunciation of all superpower military intrusions in the region (including the Afghan invasion as well as the US attempt to secure access to facilities) and a campaign to win support for its Arab charter.

64. The turmoil in Iran has encouraged the Arab gulf states to think again about cooperation insofar as they all worry about a spread of the Shia revolution. Additional concern over events in Iran and the effects of US-Soviet competition have driven Saudi Arabia and Iraq closer together despite their ideological antipathy. Nevertheless, the barriers to further cooperation in the gulf are considerable. Saudi Arabia and Oman consider the proposed charter an infringement on sovereignty, neither wants to hinder further the ability of the United States to aid them, and all of the conservative gulf rulers retain much of their tra-

ditional distrust of Iraq. Furthermore, the Iranian revolution has been a mixed blessing for Iraq's ambitions because it has forced Baghdad to devote more attention to containing its own restive Shias and Kurds. Other Arab states have expressed varying degrees of support for Iraq in its war against Iran, but the gulf states have not translated such expressions into significant military cooperation with Baghdad. They fear that such cooperation would make them targets of Iranian retaliatory strikes. In any case, the gulf states are wary of becoming ensnared in any exclusively bilateral dispute concerning the Iraqi-Iranian border.

65. Expanded cooperation among states of the Horn of Africa—a sometime Soviet goal—is unlikely. Although limited military collaboration between Ethiopia and Kenya probably will continue, the prospects for similar arrangements are virtually nonexistent between Somalia and either Kenya or Ethiopia.

66. Cooperation with neighbors will be one more avenue some northwest Indian Ocean states explore as they try to ensure their security while avoiding embroilment in the US-Soviet rivalry, but it is unlikely to become a major source of support. To hedge their bets or to avoid heavy dependence on a superpower, most will turn first to bilateral assistance from other willing benefactors, including Western Europe and wealthy Arab states.

## Future Response to the Competition

### Security Cooperation With the Superpowers

67. The future willingness of the northwest Indian Ocean states to permit access to their facilities or otherwise to assist the United States or the USSR to compete militarily in the region will depend in large measure on factors other than the competition itself. Some of these factors will be partly or wholly outside the superpowers' control.

68. One is internal political change. In particular, further chapters in the Iranian revolution will help to determine the extent of any Iranian subversive or military threat to the rest of the Persian Gulf, the spread of instability to neighboring states, Soviet influence in the area, and perceived US interests and intentions there. All of these will shape the security climate in the region and with it the security policies of regional states. Political changes may be less likely outside Iran, but in several currently pro-Western states they probably



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would bring to power rulers less inclined to rely on the United States. Any successors to the present regimes in Saudi Arabia and the smaller Persian Gulf states would probably be more nationalistic and even less likely than their predecessors to cooperate militarily with Washington. A coup in Djibouti probably would reduce if not end its security ties with France. Military cooperation with the United States would be more likely to survive changes of power in Kenya and Somalia—especially Kenya, where the political elite uniformly favors a pro-Western course.

69. Another type of change that could alter the alignment of regional states is settlement or escalation of local conflicts. An end to warfare in the Horn of Africa or a significant easing of tension between South Yemen and its neighbors—although neither seems likely in the near future—would reduce polarization in the area and probably loosen the ties between regional states and their patrons. Without the need for Soviet and Cuban military support to combat insurgencies in Eritrea and the Ogaden, Ethiopia might open itself more to non-Communist influence as it sought economic benefits from Western powers or moderate oil-producing states. A Somali regime that had made peace with its neighbors also would shift its priorities from military to economic needs, making a security relationship with Washington appear less important as long as the oil-rich Arab states provided financial aid. Conversely, eruption of a new local war involving, say, one of the Persian Gulf emirates could dispel present reservations about establishing or strengthening security ties with the United States or another major power. Concern that the Iraqi-Iranian war may spread to other Arab states could have this effect, as suggested by Saudi Arabia's recent request for US AWACS (airborne warning and control system) aircraft to assist its air defense forces.

70. The willingness of regional states to cooperate with the United States or the USSR also will depend on their perceptions of the overall balance of strength—not just the balance in the Indian Ocean—between the superpowers and on the general coherence, durability, and sensitivity of each side's foreign policy. The moderate Persian Gulf states will draw further away from the United States if they perceive that its power is receding in the face of a stronger, more assertive USSR. After the presidential election they will scrutinize US foreign policy for signs of greater firmness and consistency than they feel Washington has exhibited.

If they see none, their reluctance to place their security in US hands will grow.

71. Barring major change for any of the preceding reasons, drastic realignments in the region comparable to Somalia's expulsion of the Soviets in 1977 are unlikely. Alignment with one side in the strategic rivalry burns some of the bridges to the other, making not only realignment but also a strategy of accommodation less feasible. Increased superpower activity in the region, including US access to Somali facilities, has no doubt strengthened Soviet arguments for further access to Ethiopian facilities, which Moscow could contend was necessary to defend the Mengistu regime and to counter US military capabilities. Addis Ababa recently granted the USSR exclusive use of Dahlak Island. Kenya and Oman appear committed to a pro-Western course, and closer US-Somali ties will all but end Mogadishu's already limited opportunities to improve relations with Moscow.

72. Nonetheless, the favors any one of these states grants to its patron will depend heavily on what it thinks it is receiving in return. Oman's Qaboos will expect US economic and military aid at least sufficient to offset the negative effects of a US military presence on his territory. Most of all, he will look for a strong and continuing US commitment to Omani security that is tailored to Omani sensitivities. Although Kenya has made few demands in discussing access rights with the United States, it has high expectations for US economic assistance. It hopes also that the United States can influence Somalia to give up its expansionist aims. If either of these objectives goes unrealized—as the latter one might, in view of Siad's refusal to renounce publicly his claim to Kenyan territory—Nairobi may reconsider its military relationship with Washington. Siad Barre will likely accept substantially less military hardware than he has requested in return for US access to Somali facilities, but his later demands for arms are apt to increase. He might threaten to curtail US access rights to gain either additional aid or US acquiescence in his support to the Ogaden insurgents.

73. Djibouti and Bahrain probably will continue for the time being to permit US forces to use their air and naval facilities, but these privileges rest on shaky ground. President Gouled, who personally clears all requests for US P-3 flights, feels he has not received sufficient economic aid in return for his cooperation. This dissatisfaction, increased radical influence on his

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government, or external pressures may spell future difficulties in obtaining access to Djibouti facilities. Use of the port at Bahrain could become a casualty of Arab disgruntlement over the festering Palestinian problem.

74. Unless US credibility and capability decline a great deal further in their eyes, the pro-Western states of the northwest Indian Ocean generally will continue to accept a US military presence in the area as a counterweight to radical and Soviet assets whether or not they permit one on their own territories. Because of the risks of US-Soviet military escalation and their persistent doubts about Washington's resolve, however, these regimes will seek to impose clear limits on the size, character, location, and use of US military forces.

75. Countries other than Somalia that entertain a US military presence will want to minimize its visibility and the publicity given to it. The semantic and legal distinction between a foreign base and access to an indigenously controlled facility will remain important to them even if the practical difference is slight. Because troops tend to receive more attention than materiel, these regimes generally will be more sensitive about foreign personnel on their soil than about military construction or pre-positioning of equipment. In countries where resentment of foreign influence is most likely to become a problem, as in Oman, preference will be given to US deployments that can be isolated from the local population.

76. Other moderates share these concerns about the visibility of any US military presence and in addition will want to keep US forces outside their own countries. To minimize further the political costs of becoming identified with foreign military activity, many of them will voice opposition to such a presence even if they find it reassuring. Mauritian Prime Minister Ramgoolam, for example, openly denounces the US presence on Diego Garcia even though he welcomes it in private. Similarly, the Saudis have accepted US access rights in Oman and Somalia despite publicly dissociating themselves from these arrangements.

77. If force levels in the region stabilize, the publicity given to the strategic rivalry and to access arrangements no doubt will diminish, and some of the sensitivity of regional states regarding these arrangements might lessen as well. Nevertheless, the limits to their tolerance of nearby military activity probably

will not change appreciably. Furthermore, their continued acceptance of forces and access privileges already in place will depend on the purposes for which they are used. The Persian Gulf states will continue to be suspicious that US military operations are also intended to improve the US capability to seize oilfields. Arab countries with large Shia populations also would be very worried by any future US military action against Iran. None of the gulf states is likely to approve deployment of US ground forces in the area for any reason short of defense of one of them against overt aggression.

78. The most attractive support facilities that currently are closed to foreign powers but to which the Soviets may try to gain access are in the island states—specifically, the port and airfield at Diego Suarez in Madagascar and the anchorage and abandoned British airbase on Gan in the Maldives. The Soviets will attempt to parlay Madagascar's growing indebtedness into access to its installations. Rumors have circulated that President Ratsiraka will end his policy of barring foreign warships from his harbors and open Diego Suarez to Moscow. Such a move seems unlikely for now, chiefly because Ratsiraka could face hostile reactions from conservative internal elements, from Iraq (his primary source of oil), and most of all from France, which has increased its financial aid to Madagascar dramatically during the past two years. If Ratsiraka senses increased domestic or external danger, however, his resistance to Moscow's blandishments will diminish and the chances for Soviet access will increase. Gan likely will remain closed as a base to foreign forces. Maldivian President Gayoom follows the lead of moderate Arabs and nearby nonaligned states like Sri Lanka, and he probably will continue to resist the repeated Soviet attempts to lease Gan.

79. Island ports that are relatively open to both superpowers, including Male in the Maldives and Port Louis in Mauritius, likely will remain open, partly because of the economic benefits of foreign ship visits. The Mauritian and Maldivian governments both welcome a moderate number of port calls by US warships, enough to balance Soviet visits. The welcome in Mauritius, however, might end if the leftist MMM (Mauritian Militant Movement) came to power or even entered a governing coalition.

80. Seychelles has imposed restrictions on port calls and aircraft landings that sharply curtail US activity there while having little effect on the limited Soviet

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use of Seychelles facilities. The next US casualty in Seychelles could be the satellite-tracking station on Mahe Island, whose benefits to the local economy, once deemed important, now seem expendable. Renegotiation of the lease (now under way) will be difficult in view of Seychelles' demand for a major increase in the rental fee. Even if agreement is reached, the tracking station's long-term future is precarious given President Rene's opposition to US activity in the region.

#### Multilateral Diplomacy

81. The US-Soviet military competition has heightened interest in an Indian Ocean "zone of peace" as a device for excluding, or at least condemning, great-power rivalry in the area. Diplomatic machinery for discussion and negotiation of such a zone has existed since the UN Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean was established eight years ago. Preparations have begun in the committee for a possible UN conference on the Indian Ocean to be held in Sri Lanka in 1981. There will thus be ample occasion for the Indian Ocean states collectively to denounce the superpower rivalry in their backyard. Few, if any, of the participants in this exercise expect it to produce effective arms control (partly because disagreement over the Indian Ocean states' own military activities impedes agreement on the terms of a zone of peace). Nonetheless, it is a convenient and low-cost opportunity to recite the shibboleths of nonalignment and to resist, at least rhetorically, the pressures toward alignment.

82. Most nonaligned members of the Ad Hoc Committee will continue to press for an Indian Ocean conference, although divisions among the nonaligned and opposition from Western powers make the timing and format of such a gathering uncertain. Malagasy President Ratsiraka recently confused the issue further by calling for a summit conference on a zone of peace to be held in his capital, Antananarivo, in late 1981 or early 1982. Disagreement over the appropriateness of either a ministerial or a summit conference could mean that discussion of the zone will merely continue in the Ad Hoc Committee.

83. The USSR has attempted to exploit the heightened interest in northwest Indian Ocean security by floating a proposal for an international conference to guarantee the security of Persian Gulf oil. The Soviets also almost certainly framed the Afghan Government's

recent peace plans, which linked a settlement in Afghanistan to the creation of an Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf zone of peace. The purpose of these Soviet initiatives is to develop a dialogue with the West Europeans and Indian Ocean states, to focus attention on US military activity in the region, and to attenuate the Afghanistan issue by placing it in a larger context.

84. Such Soviet efforts are apt to be only partially successful. Denunciation of foreign military bases will be a major theme in future diplomacy on a zone of peace, with Diego Garcia serving as the principal lightning rod for criticism. Recent discussions of a zone, however, have paid increased attention to the threat posed by land forces to littoral and hinterland states, and a continued Soviet occupation of Afghanistan would also be the target of sharp diplomatic attacks. Any document emerging from a future Indian Ocean conference probably would be only a hortatory declaration that implicitly criticized both superpowers.

#### Other Foreign Policy Implications

85. The sharpened competition will affect the degree of support and opposition to other US foreign policy efforts, not just military activity in the Indian Ocean. One reason for this is that most regional states, once they establish close security ties with a superpower, become more disposed to support that power's overall foreign policy line. With greater polarization in the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia can be expected to become more stridently pro-Soviet and anti-American, although it probably will not break diplomatic relations with Washington. Somalia already has adopted a more moderate approach to international issues as relations with the United States have improved over the past year. The prospect of closer ties with the United States also seems to have increased Kenya's inclination to support US foreign policy efforts, particularly those, like the Olympic boycott, that are responses to a Soviet threat.

86. Governments that do not throw in their entire lot with one camp or the other will prefer to temporize on issues that do not concern them directly—as Djibouti, despite its pro-Western orientation, has done since independence. With a sharper US-Soviet rivalry in their region, equivocation between East and West on such issues may appear even more desirable than before in order to stay out of trouble with both sides. Moderate regimes unwilling to cooperate openly with

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Washington on security matters, however, may support US and Western interests in less direct and hence less hazardous ways. For example, the moderate Arabs might help deflect Iraqi or other radical efforts to punish Oman and Somalia for maintaining ties with the United States.

87. Closer security ties with a regional state risk identifying the United States with its client's unpopular policies. Ill will arising for this reason probably would be most widespread if, despite the US-Somali military agreement, Somalia's support for the Ogaden guerrillas continued unabated or escalated. Resentment against the United States could increase not only in Ethiopia but among other members of the OAU, which opposes the revision by force of colonial boundaries in Africa. Elsewhere, the risk is that US support for a regime that is overthrown in a coup or revolution increases the chance that the new rulers will be anti-American, and perhaps that the populace will become so as well. Public unhappiness with a discarded government usually is transferred to its patron, as happened to the United States in Iran. If the United States has furnished arms, it becomes vulnerable to the more specific charge that it has abetted oppression.

88. Perhaps the US foreign policy effort most in danger of meeting stronger opposition as an indirect result of the sharper competition is the negotiation of peace in the Middle East. Increased concern over the security of oil supplies has made the West Europeans more anxious than ever to cement relations with the oil producers and in general to emphasize closer ties with regional states rather than military escalation as a way of handling the crisis in the area. This likely will mean greater European backing for Arab positions in the Arab-Israeli dispute. In addition, the leverage the oil-rich Arab states have gained by becoming an increasingly attractive alternative source of support may lead many regional states to endorse the dominant

Arab view more strongly. The dependence of Kenya and the island states on Arab oil already makes them careful not to offend the producing states. Kenya recently extended diplomatic recognition to the Palestine Liberation Organization, apparently in exchange for promises of aid from Iraq and other Arab countries. Further dependence on the oil exporters for financial assistance could lead to more far-reaching and more explicit promises of mutual support.

89. Over the longer term, the strategic competition with the USSR—or more precisely, a perception that the USSR was winning that competition—could jeopardize the Western political and economic position in the Persian Gulf. The Soviets, if they should increase their influence in Iran or deal US interests a sharp setback in North Yemen or Oman, would be even better able than they are now to play on the insecurities of Saudi Arabia and the smaller gulf states. The gulf states might then try to buy protection by accommodating Soviet interests, particularly on oil policy.

90. The outcome of the insurgency in Afghanistan could change the regional states' perceptions of Soviet capabilities but probably would have little effect on their judgment of Moscow's intentions. If Soviet forces succeed in quashing the Afghan resistance, some moderate governments in the area may become more inclined to accommodate the USSR. The Afghanistan issue would remain as an irritant in Moscow's relations with Islamic countries, however. If a military stalemate in Afghanistan continues indefinitely or Soviet forces there suffer more dramatic setbacks, regional state perceptions of Soviet strength, and with them any inclinations to accommodate Moscow, probably would decline. Nevertheless, even a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan would be unlikely to shake the moderates' belief that Moscow intends eventually to extend its control to the Persian Gulf.

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