

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FOR 1975

HEARINGS

BEFORE A

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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PART 1

Secretary of Defense

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff

Army Reprograming

Operational Base Launch Program

U-X/CX-X Utility Aircraft



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Mr. SIKES. Do you have any additional information on the number of people employed servicewide in the contractor studies?

Mr. McCLARY. As far as the OSD initiative is concerned, the Secretary's initiative is concerned, it is only half a dozen people, a couple of people in OSD.

Mr. SIKES. I call your attention to the fact that there are teams visiting military installations, very large teams composed of 30 or more people; someone has to pay those people. They are taken off other duties.

Could you give us for the record some indication of the number of that type of personnel?

Mr. McCLARY. For the record, we will determine what those teams are.

[The information referred to appears on page 395.]

INDIAN OCEAN AREA

Mr. SIKES. At this time I want to discuss the Indian Ocean area.

The press seldom mentions it, but the fact is that Russia is all over the Indian Ocean; Somalia, Iraq, Yemen, Bangladesh. Both the Secretary and the Admiral mentioned the increase in Soviet naval forces which may be aimed at challenging sealines of communications, and may affect the proposal to provide additional facilities and expand the scope of our activity at Diego Garcia.

Do you feel, Mr. Secretary or Admiral Moorer, that the Russians are now or will be in the foreseeable future in a position to gain naval supremacy in the Indian Ocean for any significant time over the United States and our allies, if we chose to prevent it?

In other words, are they already in position to dominate the Indian Ocean? Would the reaction time required for us to offset that be such that it would not be feasible to try to offset, the reaction time plus the limitations on operating areas, bases?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. I believe, sir, that they cannot acquire domination of the Indian Ocean area, if we take the necessary measures. Our concern is that we are now operating around 4,000 to 5,000 miles out of Subic Bay, which is our closest major base at hand. Our chief limitation in the area is basing.

You mentioned a number of facilities that the Soviets have acquired. In addition, we are concerned about the implications of the prospective reopening of the Suez Canal. But if we are appropriately postured, they should not be able to acquire that degree of domination.

Mr. SIKES. But the fact is, we are not reacting and they are there in considerable force; they have bases or base rights or they are operating out of ports and we are not. Is that not true?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. Yes, sir.

I think that the ability of the U.S. fleet to operate at long distances is greater than that of the Soviet Navy, partly because of nuclear power, which makes some contribution, and partly because of our underway replenishment ships, which for the U.S. Navy are far more effective and numerous than they are for the Soviet Navy. But this would still be a considerable strain on us in the hypothetical circumstances of matching the Soviets and, for that reason, we think we should have additional facilities in the area.

Mr. SIKES. I assume that the Russians have considerable capability of sustaining major naval forces in the Indian Ocean because of the fact that they are operating there out of a number of ports that are available to them, and that their capabilities are much better than ours from that standpoint.

Secretary SCHLESINGER. I think Admiral Moorer might want to say something on that, Mr. Sikes. We are able to operate in the Indian Ocean if we choose to do so and if we divert the resources.

Mr. SIKES. But with much more difficulty?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. It is much more difficult, yes, sir.

Mr. SIKES. In other words, our supply lines are very long, thousands of miles, and theirs are very short, they are already in the area?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. Yes, sir, no question about that, Mr. Sikes.

Mr. SIKES. Was the major increase in Soviet capital ships during the Indian-Pakistan war prior to or subsequent to our deployment of a carrier task force to the Indian Ocean?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. My recollection is that it was subsequent to it.

Admiral MOORER. It was subsequent to it. However, I think that they had sailed ships from Vladivostok. They had further to go, of course. Also, they had been committed to minesweeping at Chittagong for Bangladesh at the time. But the increase in forces was almost simultaneous.

If I may comment on the bases, as you know in Somalia, Berbera, they have a very highly developed base, a communications station which covers the entire area.

They are also constructing a base. They use the Socotra Island. They have access to Aden in south Yemen; of course also to Iraq.

The opening of the Suez Canal will have an impact on their ability to maintain forces in the Indian Ocean, too.

Mr. SIKES. I will get to that. At this point, I do not want to interrupt you except to ask what type of surface combatants the Russians have in the Indian Ocean. Has there been any significant change in types?

For instance, they brought in some minesweepers for the clearing operations in Bangladesh. What type of surface ships generally do they have in the Indian Ocean?

Admiral MOORER. Usually, sir, they maintain a cruiser type, two to three destroyer types, about four minesweepers, and one or two submarines. In other words, about 9 to 10 combatant ships. In addition, they maintain—

Mr. SIKES. If I am getting on the edge of classified material, tell me and we will leave it off. But go ahead to that point.

Admiral MOORER. Yes, sir.

In addition, they maintain a group of space surveillance ships in the Indian Ocean as well.

Mr. SIKES. That compares with what on our part?

Admiral MOORER. We, of course, have the Middle East force, which is composed of an amphibious ship (the command ship) and two destroyers, and then, subsequent to October 6, periodically we have been deploying forces from the 7th Fleet in the Pacific into the Indian Ocean.

EFFECT OF OPENING SUEZ CANAL

MR. SIKES. To what extent will the opening of the Suez Canal enable the naval forces of the Soviet Union and the United States to have greater access to the Indian Ocean during peacetime as well as during periods of contingencies?

Admiral MOORER. First, with respect to peacetime, the Soviets, of course, could readily draw their forces from the Black Sea fleet, through the Dardanelles, into the Mediterranean, and through the Suez to the Indian Ocean. This would have the effect of shortening the line by certainly several thousand miles as compared to going all around Capetown or bringing the forces from the Vladivostok area, which they are doing now.

So far as the United States is concerned, it would permit us to shift units from the 6th Fleet into the Indian Ocean readily. In time of conflict, of course, any waterway such as the Suez Canal is highly vulnerable. Consequently, it would be highly likely that it would be closed by one side or the other.

MR. SIKES. But insofar as the Suez is concerned, during the times that it is operable, the advantage would be significantly on the side of the Soviets; is that correct?

Admiral MOORER. Yes, sir; I think in terms of shortening the lines from their bases to their operating areas, the answer to that is "Yes."

MR. SIKES. Do you, if you are in position to give a comment at this time, feel the Indian Ocean would rank high or low in Soviet priorities in a general war?

Admiral MOORER. Well, sir, I think that certainly in light of the attention that has been drawn to the importance of that area in recent months, and the lines of supply leading into the Persian Gulf area, the Indian Ocean constitutes a very important strategic area in any kind of war.

MR. SIKES. Well, we have sought to establish at Diego Garcia a facility which would provide communications, refueling and limited airfield support which began in 1966. Up to this point the Congress has limited our facilities at Diego Garcia to an austere communications facility. Is this the time to expand our facility at Diego Garcia and increase our deployment of naval forces in the Indian Ocean?

Admiral MOORER. I think it is highly important that the United States have a facility of this kind which can provide fuel and limited aircraft stopover capabilities as well as additional communications. Otherwise, at this particular time, Mr. Sikes, we have no place in the Indian Ocean where United States air or naval forces can have access to fueling of this nature without making arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

Under present conditions, we, of course, would be required to operate on ships, for instance, out of Subic Bay, some 5,000 miles away, as the Secretary mentioned. This requires more supply ships and makes the operation more difficult. So I personally feel that Diego Garcia is highly important to our interests.

MR. SIKES. Are the support facilities available to the Russians, from countries friendly to them, superior to those available to the United States in the Indian Ocean area?

Admiral MOORER. Well, sir, I mentioned the access they have to Berbera, Socotra, Aden, and Iraq. So the answer to your question is "Yes."

MR. SIKES. Have we exhausted the possibilities of negotiation with the Russians to limit facilities or forces in the Indian Ocean?

Admiral MOORER. This has been proposed and discussed, I believe, in the United Nations from time to time. But, to my knowledge, nothing substantive has come out of these discussions so far.

MR. SIKES. In the event of a general conflict, how vulnerable would the installation at Diego Garcia be?

Admiral MOORER. Well, sir, I think that in general, any base such as that is subject to attack. Vulnerability is relative, depending on how much defense we concentrated in the area.

MR. SIKES. I want to suspend for just a moment.

MR. FLYNT. May I interrupt to make a motion?

MR. SIKES. Yes.

MOTION AND VOTE TO CLOSE HEARING

MR. FLYNT. I move that the remainder of the hearing today with the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs be closed at 3 p.m., because of the classification of matters to be discussed at that time.

MR. SIKES. Very well. The clerk will call the roll.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Mahon?

MR. MAHON. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Sikes?

MR. SIKES. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Flood?

[No response.]

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Addabbo?

[No response.]

MR. PRESTON. Mr. McFall?

[No response.]

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Flynt?

MR. FLYNT. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Giaimo?

MR. GIAIMO. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Whitten?

[No response.]

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Minshall?

MR. MINSHALL. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Davis?

[No response.]

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Wyman?

MR. WYMAN. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Mr. Edwards?

MR. EDWARDS. Aye.

MR. PRESTON. Seven members, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MAHON. Very well; the motion is carried and the session will be closed beginning at 3 o'clock to permit discussion of classified matter.

Mr. FLYNT. May I ask a question?
It would be unclassified and open between 2 and 3 p.m.?
Mr. SIKES. Until 3 o'clock.

DIEGO GARCIA

What further capabilities should be provided at Diego Garcia and how significant are these in terms of our ability to deploy or support naval and air activities in the Indian Ocean area?

Now, that is a two-pronged question.

Admiral MOORER. Well, we would want to improve the runway, lengthen it so that it could accommodate additional types of aircraft; increase the parking area for the aircraft; increase the fuel capacity overall for both ship and aircraft fuel, and provide a proper anchorage for certain auxiliary ships such as a tender, or an ammunition ship, something of that kind in the event we chose to operate there.

Mr. SIKES. What is the significance of these improvements? Presently we have an austere communications station. Do you propose to make it into a limited operating station?

Admiral MOORER. Yes, sir, a limited facility.

Mr. SIKES. What is the significance of that?

Admiral MOORER. Well, sir, it would simply make it unnecessary for us, in the case of small-scale developments, to rely on a naval base in the Philippines, 5,000 miles away, and would be more economical and provide us with more flexibility in terms of operations in that general area.

Mr. SIKES. A great deal depends on the essentiality of these activities, these improvements at Diego Garcia to the American presence in the Indian Ocean.

Would you say they are essential or is it just to improve the convenience or the economy of our operations there?

Admiral MOORER. In my view, I would describe them as essential, sir.

Mr. SIKES. Do you share that view, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. Yes, sir.

A-10 AIRCRAFT

Mr. SIKES. How is Fairchild Republic doing on cost and schedule?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. The A-10 program, which includes major contracts on the airframe, engine, and gun, is on schedule and within established cost parameters. To date, the few minor problems which we have encountered have been resolved.

Mr. SIKES. Does the fact that you are requesting procurement moneys in July for the first 26 aircraft commit the Congress to full production go-ahead?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. No, sir. We do not plan to execute the contract for the 26 A-10's until after the Congress has completed its action on our fiscal year 1975 request. We are hopeful that the Congress will allow us to order long leadtime components in July 1974 in order to provide for an orderly transition from development to production and to enable us to obtain the aircraft in the most economical manner.

Mr. SIKES. What positive controls have been imposed on the A-10

program to prevent cost increases? To prevent unnecessary "gold plating"?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. We have established a management "design to cost" goal for the A-10 of \$1.5 million each. Within that framework, we have assigned an amount for the airframe, the engine, the gun, and other GFE. When cost estimates for any of these areas indicate a need for review, we will consider performance tradeoffs before approving any cost increases. Our emphasis throughout will be to adhere to the "design to cost" goal that we have established. Frankly, we will probably have more problems associated with insuring adequate aircraft performance at the specified cost than we will with "gold plating."

Mr. SIKES. Has the GAU-8A 30mm gun been fired in the A-10 aircraft?

Secretary SCHLESINGER. Yes. We have fired over 5,000 rounds in flight to demonstrate the compatibility of the gun in the A-10 aircraft.

Mr. SIKES. Does the A-10 contract require advance funding on July 1, 1974, with penalties being assessed against the Government for each month these funds cannot be made available under the continuing resolution?

Mr. McCLARY. I am not familiar with that.

Secretary SCHLESINGER. We will have to answer that for the record. [The information follows:]

The original A-10 contract called for either the execution of the first production option or the provision of long leadtime funding by May 31, 1974. Funds were requested in the amount of \$30.0 million in the fiscal year 1974 Budget to fund long leadtime components. Congress did not authorize or appropriate these funds. As a result, the Air Force is now negotiating with the contractor to extend the May 31, 1974 date to July 31, 1974. This latter date appears to be the latest date we can start without incurring increased costs for the first production option.

Mr. SIKES. I would like to know whether this is a standard procedure and, if not, why the contract was written in this way? Provide it for the record.

Secretary SCHLESINGER. Surely.

[The information follows:]

The current procedure being followed for major programs such as the A-10 is to provide in the contract sufficient flexibility to allow DOD or the Congress to alter the original contract plan if circumstances dictate that such action is in the best interest of the Government. It is, of course, necessary to provide reasonable consideration to the contractor if a program adjustment is made.

Mr. SIKES. Quite possibly you do not have at your fingertips the answers on the A-10. I have several of them that I will submit for the record at this point.

Does the A-10 contract also specify firm fixed prices on 26 A-10 aircraft in fiscal year 1975 but only 22 aircraft in fiscal year 1976, even though Air Force plans are that 64 such aircraft will be budgeted in fiscal year 1976?

If so, does this mean that the other 42 aircraft will have to be negotiated separately outside the basic contract?

[The information follows:]

The A-10 development contract contains two fixed-price-incentive-firm production options. The fiscal year 1975 option is for 26 aircraft with a variation clause of plus or minus 50 percent. Our budget request is for 26 aircraft. The fiscal year 1976 option is for 22 aircraft plus or minus 50 percent. Our current plans for