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THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.



JCSM-735-63
24 September 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: Feasibility of Deployment of a Carrier Task Force in the Indian Ocean (U)

1. Reference is made to your memorandum, dated 16 August 1963, subject as above; and the letter to you from the Secretary of State, dated 17 August 1963, which was forwarded for consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff by a memorandum from the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA), I-25989/63, dated 20 August 1963, subject as above.
2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed the question of deployment of a carrier task force to the Indian Ocean, to include consideration of alternative methods of bringing US military power to bear in the area. They have considered this question in light of global requirements for maintaining a US military posture adequate to respond to possible contingencies, and in light of the following pertinent additional considerations:
 - a. With respect to US national security, the Indian Ocean area continues to hold a strategic priority less than the Western Hemisphere, Western Europe, the Western Pacific, and other areas in the Middle East.
 - b. The military situation which might require the deployment of US forces in the Indian Ocean area cannot be forecast. For the immediate future, it would appear that resumption of Sino-Indian hostilities or an outbreak of hostilities between Pakistan and India might require the introduction of US forces. Neither of these possibilities requires the immediate and continuing presence of US forces at this time.
 - c. Current and planned US military activities provide substantial evidence of continuing US interest and intent to assist in the defense of the countries involved. Among these activities are:

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(1) US affiliations with CENTO, membership in SEATO, and US bilateral defense agreements with certain countries.

(2) US military assistance programs.

(3) US participation in joint and combined military exercises. The FY 1964 and 1965 joint/combined exercise schedule for this area, as approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for planning and programming purposes, is shown in Appendix B hereto.



d. The psychological impact to be gained by introducing US nuclear-capable forces into the Indian Ocean area prior to the detonation of a Chinese nuclear device is not clear to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

3. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have considered the costs and impact of deploying an attack carrier task force to the Indian Ocean on a permanent (full-time) basis. This could be accomplished in either of the following two ways:

a. Additional forces could be generated in order to maintain current deployments to other areas. This alternative could not be implemented at an early date while maintaining the present carrier force commitments. In addition to the attack carriers now in commission, only the LEXINGTON (training carrier at Pensacola) and INTREPID (active CVS in LANTFLT) are equipped with steam catapults. This class has a marginal capability for operating the

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F4 series of interceptors, and could not operate the TFX. Additional destroyers, support ships, and possibly austere advance facilities in the Indian Ocean also would be required. From the standpoint of timeliness, excessive cost, and availability of resources, this alternative is not acceptable.

b. Alternatively, forces could be diverted from present areas of assignment for full-time deployment in the Indian Ocean.

The relative priorities of missions and the requirements incident to maintaining normal peacetime rotation of these forces indicate that, if an attack carrier task force is to be deployed full time in the Indian Ocean under current force levels and deployment schedules, it should be at the expense of forces on station in the [redacted]. Additional airlift support would be required for this force while in the Indian Ocean, at an annual cost of about \$1.2 million if the ships were deployed for periods of two months each. If this type of deployment is sustained indefinitely, it will probably become necessary to increase fleet logistic force levels because of increased supply lines, or to develop austere logistic support facilities in the Indian Ocean. The initial cost of development of an austere advance base would be \$19.8 million, with an annual sustaining cost of \$8.0 to \$9.0 million, depending on the length of deployment of the ships in the task force.

4. With respect to the impact of the deployment as indicated in subparagraph 3 b, above, the normal disposition of the three carrier task groups in the [redacted]

The impact of deployment of a task force to the Indian Ocean would be to reduce general war capability, particularly with respect to meeting alert commitments in the event one of the two remaining carriers became inoperational for any reason, and to reduce forces immediately available for more likely contingencies in the [redacted]

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as well as the added costs, favor normal deployment of the third carrier task force in the [REDACTED]

5. In view of the foregoing, the Joint Chiefs of Staff conclude that, with forces available or likely to become available, the current and planned US military activities in the Indian Ocean area are appropriate to indicate continuing support of US strategic interests. They recognize that it may become necessary on occasion to increase US military presence, in response to specific situations, and in support of specific political objectives. In such instances, the selection of forces to be employed should be made considering the capabilities of all types of forces in relation to the nature of the requirement. The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that an appropriate selection can be made from among the following alternatives, utilizing the forces listed, individually or collectively:

[REDACTED] On this basis, costs would be minimal and not exceed \$0.2 million annually for additional airlift.

[REDACTED] Total annual deployments of these elements should not exceed the equivalent of an eight-squadron force deployed for a three-month period.

[REDACTED] would involve \$7.3 million, of which \$6.8 million is MATS reimbursable transport. These costs are directly related to the size of force deployed at any one time.

[REDACTED] A 30-day brigade exercise would entail added costs of approximately \$2.1 million, of which \$1.8 million is MATS reimbursable transport. On the other hand, participation by a [REDACTED] in such an exercise would entail added costs of approximately \$1.1 million, of which \$.9 million is MATS reimbursable transport.

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6. In view of the cost factors and maldeployment of forces discussed above, it is militarily undesirable to deploy any forces to the Indian Ocean area at this time. If, for political reasons, it is necessary to increase US military presence in the area, all means available should be considered in relation to the nature of the requirement. However, if it is determined that the temporary deployment of a carrier task force is politically necessary at this time, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are prepared to take this action.

7. It is recommended that you forward a memorandum, substantially the same as that contained in Appendix A hereto, to the Secretary of State summarizing the foregoing views.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

SIGNED
CURTIS E. LEMAY
Acting Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachment

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