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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

ALPHA CHANNEL

April 9, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. PETER TARNOFF, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE
SECRETARY AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary Brown seeks Secretary Vance's concurrence in the attached memorandum prior to our sending it to the President. Because of its sensitivity, Secretary Brown requests that this subject not be addressed outside the ALPHA Channel.

Carl R. Smith
Carl R. Smith
Brigadier General, USAF
Military Assistant to the
Secretary of Defense

Attachment

DECLASSIFIED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE
INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2015-071, document no. 12
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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Logistics Planning with Jordan and Egypt (S)

(S) Avoiding or minimizing the need for US ground combat forces in a Persian Gulf crisis not involving a direct Soviet attack would be very much in our interest. Being able to utilize third country units, with the US providing the lift, would contribute to that goal. Bilateral preplanning for this purpose could shorten deployment time by a matter of days, and enhance the deterrence or damage limitation impact of any intervention.

(S) We have already begun this process very quietly with Jordan on a no commitment basis. A DoD military team recently held discussions in Amman designed to develop the airlift, communications and training requirements necessary to support the lift of a Jordanian special forces brigade task force. In order to minimize political repercussions in the event of leaks, no political-military scenarios were developed nor was any particular destination specified. Rather, the focus was solely on the Jordanian end of the scenario: deployment forces, deployment sequence; departure airfields; short tons and cubic feet of equipment, etc. We plan to follow up those discussions with more detailed work, including airfield surveys, exchange of small training teams, etc.

(S) Similar, very close-hold planning with the Egyptians would advance our interests. Since Egypt's armed forces are so much larger than Jordan's, the initial focus of the planning might appropriately be on the lift and communications needed to transport a division-size force with 30 days' support. If the discussions prove successful, the likely follow-on would be more detailed joint effort on load preparation and planning, training techniques for assembly, practice for aircraft loading, communications interface, airfield security, etc.

(S) Again, and for the same reasons as in Jordan's case, no political-military scenarios or designated destinations would be employed in the initial discussions but the range arc used for load analysis would be sufficient to include Sudan and Saudi Arabia. It would be agreed clearly at the outset that the joint planning would involve no commitment to actual implementation.

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(S) I plan to raise this matter soon with MOD Ali. If he reacts favorably to this proposal, as he probably will, the discussion could be conducted by a small military team and can be structured so there is very low risk of publicity. In the unlikely event of a leak, we could take advantage of Sadat's frequent public offers of use of Egyptian facilities in an emergency by saying that we are exploring with the Egyptians the utilization of their airfields by US transport aircraft in a crisis. We cannot, however, entirely eliminate the risk of publicity -- and with it a psychological shock, to the Israelis and other Arabs, whose consequences are difficult to foresee but could be damaging. I believe this is an acceptable risk.

(U) Cy Vance agrees with this memorandum.