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STUDENT ESSAY

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SOVIET MID-TERM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND PROSPECTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

BY

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Block 20. ABSTRACT (continued)

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by

Colonel Robert F. Collins
Military Intelligence

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SOVIET MID-TERM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND PROSPECTS
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The Soviet Union has been forced, by both external factors and internal constraints, to modify its strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1980's, and these changes in its strategies will continue for the next five to ten years. The term Sub-Saharan Africa refers to all nations of Africa except the North African states of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, which are economically, culturally, historically, and geopolitically apart from their southern neighbors.

I shall comment on several broad areas of Soviet-African relations: Soviet continuing objectives in Sub-Saharan Africa; Soviet changing priorities and strategies in the area; African realities that work against Soviet strategies; and then conclude with a brief look at Soviet prospects for success in Sub-Saharan Africa. One word of caution is important in discussing Sub-Saharan Africa. It is a mistaken simplification to fail to discriminate among the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the strictest sense, there is no Sub-Saharan Africa as such. It is only an artificial grouping; there are 46 separate countries with 46 separate histories, cultures, experiences, perceptions, mindsets, etc.¹ Sub-Saharan Africa does not speak with one voice--it will never speak with one voice. Africa is unrivaled in geographic, economic, political, linguistic, and ethnic diversity. In the political realm, prior to 1957, only four independent states existed in Africa south of the Sahara--Ethiopia, Liberia, Sudan, and South Africa. In a little over ten years, 32 more sovereign, independent states were created on the continent, with four more in the 1970's. That is an unprecedented political transformation. These political systems

range the entire political spectrum, including Marxist (Angola, Mozambique), democracies (Nigeria), one party states on both the right and left (Tanzania, Ivory Coast), monarchies (Lesotho, Swaziland), military dictatorships (Benin, Ethiopia, Mauritania), and white minority regimes of South Africa and Namibia.² The states range in extreme from Sao Tome and Principe with a size of 964 sq km, a population of 88,000, literacy rate of five to ten percent, predominantly Christian, a GDP of 40 million with per capita income of \$490.00 and no natural resources, to Sudan with 2.5 million sq km, a population of 20.5 million, literacy rate of 20 percent, predominantly Sunni Muslim, a GDP of five billion with \$478.00 per capita, and significant industrial development, to South Africa with a size of 1.2 million sq km, a population of 31 million, literacy rate of 60 percent, predominantly Christian, a GDP of 81 billion with \$2,700.00 per capita and resources and minerals far exceeding those of all other African countries.³ Cartographers are kept busy as independent African nations shed their colonial past. Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) is the latest example. The main point is that Sub-Saharan Africa is an area of great diversity, a violent short history of independence, artificial boundaries, uneven distribution of peoples and resources, haves and have nots even within individual countries, endemic instability, increasing expectations, and burning nationalism. The Soviet Union has finally realized that Sub-Saharan Africa is not homogenous and strategies must be constructed accordingly.

Direct Soviet political involvement in black Africa is still a relatively new venture; Soviet initiatives coincided directly with the process of decolonization, and aside from Krushchev's rhetoric about black Africa in the early '60's, Brezhnev's regime is the first to actively

pursue Soviet strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Soviet objectives for the region have only undergone minor changes and they are still fairly consistent. Joseph L. Noguee has briefly summarized Soviet objectives as follows: (a) reduce both Western and Chinese influence on the continent; (b) undermine the remaining white-dominated regimes in Southern Africa and disrupt the dialogue South Africa is attempting to cultivate with some black African states; (c) obtain leverage over the liberation movements in the region, notably the Southwest African People's Organization (SWAPO), the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and the African National Congress (ANC); (d) enhance Soviet relations with all the countries of Africa, particularly the "front-line" states of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia; (e) deny the U.S. strategic rights in Angola, including access to ports, aircraft overflights and landing privileges, while seeking to obtain these privileges for the Soviet Union; (f) countering not only U.S. but South African, Zairian and Zambian influence in Southern Africa and the support given by these pro-Western regimes to the front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA); (g) denying the West the mineral resources of South Africa which include gold, diamonds, chromite, copper, antimony, platinum, cobalt and uranium; and (h) gaining for the Soviet Union facilities in Africa to support their naval forces.⁴ To these broad objectives, several other continuing objectives can be added: gain black African support in world fora (notably UN), promote Soviet economic model as best for developing countries, promote Soviet ideological tenets to aid "revolutionary" movements, demonstrate true superpower reach and global concerns, and utilize surrogates in Africa to the best Soviet advantage.

Most of the attention in the West has been focused on Soviet military objectives in Africa while only briefly considering Soviet political

objectives in the continent. It is true that military projection has been the only effective method for the USSR to demonstrate its superpower status in Africa. The Soviet Union has sought forms of local support in the Third World that would facilitate its projection of power and prestige worldwide. This has primarily involved logistical support (bunkering, repairs and refitting, foodstuffs, etc.) for naval forces and merchant shipping, over-flight and landing rights for naval air and military transport aviation (VTA), and commercial air routes and support facilities for Aeroflot, Moscow's civil air organization. The watershed decision on the part of the USSR to introduce Cuban surrogates onto the African continent in pursuit of military objectives in both Angola and Ethiopia contributed significantly to U.S. fears that U.S. economic interests in Africa were greatly threatened. The USSR seeks to reduce and perhaps eventually eliminate the large percentage of vital strategic materials imported into the U.S., Western Europe and Japan from Africa. Related to this objective is Moscow's latent capability to control vital checkpoints through which international shipping lanes pass. Approximately 20 percent of Western Europe's oil passes through the Indian Ocean and around the Cape of Good Hope--the world's most crowded shipping lane. The success of Soviet military objectives to gain influence would assist in denying the Third World markets to the West and the U.S. Western trade, investment and aid, particularly as foreign-owned industries are nationalized would be at risk. However, in my view, Soviet political objectives in Africa pose a much greater threat to U.S. interests and global and regional stability if prosecuted successfully.

If the USSR were to achieve its political objectives, it would develop a constellation of pro-Marxist states in Africa to serve as the

vanguard for social change throughout the continent. Such pro-Soviet states would support Moscow's claim to leadership of the entire Third World. They would validate the Soviet Union's revolutionary model. This model is the means by which the Soviets seek to detach the strategically important nations of the Third World from the capitalist/imperialist system and merge with the anti-imperialist struggle against capitalism. As such, the Third World "national liberation zone" is the "main link" in the chain of anti-imperialist/capitalist struggle during the current period. Former colonies are the "reserve of imperialism", but also imperialism's weakest link, where ensuing armed conflicts will bring down the capitalist system. Therefore, relations between the USSR and the Third World are "symbiotic", the success of each promoting the cause of the other.

This process will inevitably generate conflict, which can be diminished if non-Capitalist models of development are adopted and countries join the "vanguard" in the national liberation zone and in socialist countries in opposing imperialism and neo-imperialism. Resulting wars, whether for social revolution or political independence, are "just" wars. The Soviet state and world socialist system will support all "just" wars. "Local" wars fought against aggressors and oppressors are "just", but cannot be won without active support of the Soviet Union and world socialism. Moscow regards it as its "internationalist duty" to support all "just" wars and is prepared to do so with all means at its command. Proven spin-offs from emerging countries' adoption of the Soviet revolutionary model are adoption of the USSR economic developmental model and relationships of economic dependence on the USSR. This model postulates economic independence from the West and rapid modernization and industrialization

of a developing state through redistribution of political and economic power. Socialist forms are substituted for colonial and neocolonial forms to include the collectivization of agriculture, central planning, state ownership of industry and trade, and industry--particularly heavy industry--the leading sector over agriculture. Recent modifications, reflective of increased realism, acknowledge the need to develop industry related to assisting foodstuff production and accept a mixed rather than a purely state-controlled economy. Nevertheless, Moscow asserts that the model is universal and transferable throughout the developing world. Adoption of the economic model or even some modification of the model leads to increased economic dependence on the USSR. The USSR will use transferable ruble accounts under the aegis of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) International Investment Bank in order to gain an assured supply of fuel and raw materials in return for Soviet/East European manufactured goods.⁵ Economic ties obviously mean increased political ties. U.S. interests are best served if we understand the end results desired by the USSR in Africa, and not concentrate exclusively on the military manifestations of Soviet objectives.

While Soviet objectives have remained relatively consistent over the past 20 years, changing as the local political situations dictate, there have been several major developments that have far reaching implications for Sino-African relations. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has significantly scaled down its assistance in all fields to Black African nations. From its peak of assistance in the late '60's and early '70's in the form of grants, technicians, military arms, and favorable loan agreements, the PRC has looked more inward and focused on its modernization program the past seven years, roughly coinciding with Mao's death. While

the PRC could never compete with the USSR on an equal basis in terms of military sales or economic assistance, the PRC commitment did offer an alternative source of assistance to developing states (Tanzania and Zambia are good examples). Today the PRC has little material support to offer the African nations, although PRC has consistently striven to become an acknowledged leader of Third World countries and will offer moral and rhetorical support to Black African positions. As a result, the USSR is far less constrained in its dealings on the ground in Africa; its three-sided contest for influence now is only two-sided as one of the major players has retired. Second, while many African states have abandoned earlier pretensions to radicalism of any kind, and radical popular movements have generally disappeared from most countries; the radical oppositions which do still emerge, especially among the young, tend to be far less shy of Marxism than their forbears--a development undoubtedly reinforced by the success of Marxist-influenced liberation movements in various parts of the continent. Third, as inequalities of power among Third World states become more apparent, the capacity and willingness of some to intervene militarily in the conflicts of others have increased. Fourth, the USSR itself now is in a better position to project force on a significant scale on the continent.⁶ Fifth, the introduction of Cuban fighting forces into Angola and Ethiopia has significantly altered the African mosaic. It is clear that Cuba acts as a surrogate for the USSR, but it is equally clear that Cuba is pursuing its own interests at the same time. Despite considerable costs to Cuba, both economic and political as well as domestic burdens, there are no signs to indicate Cuban withdrawal from Africa. The Cuban factor in Africa is a new and potentially explosive consideration in the equation.

Soviet strategies to attain its objectives are many and varied. The USSR has learned from experience over the past 25 years, and their methods are now more sophisticated and mature. It is a misconception to view Soviet foreign policy as rigid and unchanging, unable to change with changing international conditions. Soviet strategies over the past three decades have continually undergone modification and in some cases (switch-over of support to Ethiopia vice Somalia in 1977) a complete reversal of policies. Soviet strategies in tropical Africa are most accurately characterized as opportunistic, pragmatic, flexible and adaptable to local conditions. Soviet expectations in tropical Africa have been greatly tempered since the early '60's as a result of failures and disappointments, and today's leaders have more realistic expectations as well as more realistic strategies for success.

Soviet strategies are similar in many respects to traditional Western methods of attempting to win influence, but there are also significant differences in Soviet methods. Generally speaking, Soviet involvement in tropical Africa over the past 15 years has focused on the unstable poverty states (Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Guinea, Zaire, Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda). Marxist ideology regards the poor as the greatest source of discontent and logically would target such groups. Additionally, the governments of the poorer states are the least likely to resist external involvement because the USSR will provide promises of economic development as well as security assistance to control political unrest. Social discontent is endemic to poorer societies, and this often leads to general political instability. Governments that lack adequate political and economic infrastructures are thus likely to welcome economic progress and security assistance for both

political and pragmatic reasons--foreign involvement is a necessary evil.⁷ This does not mean that Moscow is not interested in large power centers in Africa; obviously, Soviet attempts to court Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zambia demonstrate Soviet desire to gain a foothold iwth influential states, but Soviet strategies are more likely to be successful in lesser developed, politically turbulent states.

Soviet strategies range from traditional extension of diplomatic recognition and exchange of personnel to an extensive array of covert activities on the continent. A diplomatic presence has been established in every African country that will admit Soviet diplomats. The emergence of a Socialist Africa is now seen as a long building process in contrast to rhetoric in the late '60's which trumpeted the almost instantaneous transition to socialism. Pravda of 28 August 1978, in discussing the issue of African states with a socialist orientation, described "the gradual creation of the political, material, social, and cultural pre-conditions for the transition to building socialism."⁸ The USSR realizes that an extensive diplomatic presence will assist in this long building process. There is no African country that does not have Soviet ambassadorial representation, almost invariably on a resident basis. Even where the USSR cannot be represented (South Africa for example), it is an active external participant in local political affairs.⁹ Large diplomatic missions also serve well as covers for more important covert operations in Africa.

The strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa that has received greatest attention world-wide has been Soviet military assistance, and it has generally been judged as "one of the most successful and durable instruments in Soviet policy toward the Third World."¹⁰ However, military assistance

is but one thread in the quilt of aid, both military and economic. This significant transfer of aid and resources can be grouped into the following categories: (a) provision of Soviet and Communist bloc personnel; (b) grant or sale of Soviet military hardware; (c) formation of joint enterprises, particularly in transportation, fishing, and resource extraction endeavors; and (d) provision of scholarships for the civilian and military training of Africans in Soviet institutions. In all four categories of aid, the assistance comes with strings attached.

The use of Soviet personnel, including economic technicians, military technicians, economic and military advisors, and active military troops probably doubled in the 1970's from @ 4,000 to @ 7,600.¹¹ While these figures are significant for Soviet strategies, what is more significant is the fact that Moscow has chosen to delegate tasks on the ground to allies (East Europeans and Cubans) as much as possible, and with a great deal of success. Use of surrogates offers several advantages to the USSR: it minimizes possibilities of a direct USSR-U.S. confrontation in Africa; it leaves the USSR less susceptible to charges of superpower intervention, it lessens Soviet culpability if things go badly in a country; it provides the USSR leverage in dealing with African states if the African states perceive the USSR has direct influence on the surrogates, and use of surrogates is less expensive than direct involvement. Payments for proxy forces usually do not involve actual transfer of funds; rather, governments like Cuba have large debts to the USSR and these debts are adjusted for service abroad under the direction of Moscow.¹²

Moscow's military aid program seems to be a carefully formulated program designed to fulfill specific political and strategic needs. Certain characteristics of the program have become apparent over the past two

decades. Military aid is applied opportunistically, taking advantage of instabilities created by international crisis and regional conflicts; it is purposeful--it has steadily increased despite frequent setbacks;¹³ it is flexible--mid-course corrections based on the changing political situation are relatively easy for the USSR to make; ideological considerations are not an overriding factor in its application; the main criterion for granting military aid is the perceived potential for political and strategic returns; and on balance, military aid is relatively effective in gaining influence in the targeted regions and having an immediate impact on regional balances of power. Soviet military hardware is delivered on extremely favorable terms. The majority of the debts are financed by Soviet credits with low interest rate (2-2½ percent) and long repayment periods (8-10 years). Soviet military prices are generally lower than Western prices with discounts of up to 40 percent for politically sensitive nations. Quick delivery is usually made from existing inventories, and the trend has been for the USSR to offer more modern hardware over the past several years rather than selling outmoded equipment. Still, the Third World countries serve as good markets for some outdated Soviet military equipment as the African scene particularly is well suited for utilizing secondhand Soviet small arms and explosives. Favorable deals for African countries on military hardware with the associated infrastructure of repair parts, technicians, and military advisors has been the most successful Soviet strategy in the past, and it will be the most successful strategy in the mid-term for the Soviets.

The Soviet Union consistently has attempted to involve Sub-Saharan governments in various types of joint ventures. Economic advantages are gained from these ventures, but the USSR is quite open in stating that the

USSR will use foreign economic relations to fulfill political and economic tasks.¹⁴ The USSR also derives propaganda benefits while claiming these joint ventures help liberate Third World countries from "hegemonic capitalism." The USSR has signed agreements with several African countries to assist in developing extraction industries (Guinea--bauxite, Morocco--phosphate, Nigeria--oil) as well as entering into agreements with Western countries to undertake joint projects in Africa.¹⁵ It is ironic that the USSR is now open to the same criticism that the USSR leveled against West European nations for so many years--exploiting the colonies for raw materials. The USSR makes extensive use of its state controlled airline, Aeroflot, maritime transport, and fishing fleets to assure high visibility in Sub-Saharan states. The USSR has consistently increased the numbers of joint direct air links between Moscow and African capitals since 1961 to emphasize that friendly state-to-state relations exist. Merchant fleet activities "show the flag" as well as expanding the number of joint fishing agreements (Angola, Benin, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Somalia).¹⁶ Such arrangements are not without friction, particularly in the fishing enterprises, but overall, joint enterprises give the Soviets an entree into African countries and heightened influence easily follows.

The USSR has been very astute in responding to African educational needs. Africans respect the value of education more so than any other people with the exception of the Chinese. The USSR has provided educational aid in the form of teachers and sometimes schools, and scholarships for African youth as well as military training. Figures are difficult to obtain, but best estimates hold the USSR has provided military training for over 15,000 Africans since 1955,¹⁷ and there are approximately 10,000

African students studying in Soviet universities at any given time. It is difficult to assess the impact of these programs on spreading Soviet influence in the continent, but it is clear that the USSR feels providing the educational development of Africa's future leaders is an excellent investment.

The USSR has increasingly relied on a naval expansion as a strategy for increasing influence in Africa. As the USSR achieved superpower status, it also converted to a true "blue-water navy." Since the late 1960's, the Soviet navy has extended itself from the Mediterranean Sea first into the Indian Ocean and then into the South Atlantic. Soviet warships are now stationed in Mozambique's Maputo harbor as well as Angolan ports. The USSR used the Angolan ports to monitor the progress of Great Britain's Navy across the Atlantic in the Falkland Islands crisis. The Soviet naval presence provides credibility to Moscow's claim as a superpower, shows the flag, assists Moscow's strategic interests, and is generally a low-risk option. Naval fleets have the capability to respond quickly to changing political situations and are less subject to charges of intervention as the deployment of ground troops. Naval deployments also offer obvious advantages in the event military assistance or actual fighting is required.

Soviet covert activities in Sub-Saharan Africa, though extensive, are difficult to substantiate, and consequently receive little publicity in the West. Covert activities, usually termed "KGB activities," are a natural part of Soviet foreign policy. The West and the U.S. in particular, operate at a terrific disadvantage in the field of covert operations. There is a majority opinion in the U.S. that covert activities are not proper for a democratic nation; no such constraints exist in the USSR.

The Russian and Soviet penchant for secrecy, intrigue, and conspiracy has been well documented, and Black Africa serves as an ideal arena for Soviet subversion. African politics are still in the developing stage and extremely fragile. Leadership in the various states is usually vested in a single individual or a small ruling elite; rule changes frequently as a result of military coups or tribal upheavals. The political structure in most countries is nondemocratic--an environment that promotes covert operations. All these conditions lend themselves to higher success rates for Moscow in manipulating internal and external affairs of African nations. Once a government is targeted for overthrow, the USSR usually will supply arms and activate local agent networks in labor unions, universities, and the armed forces. The expanding number of legitimate Soviet business and diplomatic activities in Black Africa provides excellent cover for covert operations as well as increasing opportunities for covert activities. The USSR does not meet with success in all its covert activities as evidenced by periodic ousting of Soviet diplomatic personnel and cutting diplomatic ties (Ghana, Zaire, Sudan, Kenya, Mali, Zambia). However, the USSR has profited from its early heavy-handed mistakes and now employs more sophisticated covert methods as well as employing various proxies to engage in active subversion.

What are the prospects for Soviet success in broadening its influence in Sub-Saharan Africa in the next 5-10 years? Conventional wisdom has usually held that Black Africa is ripe for Soviet plucking; in my view, that evaluation is both alarmist and unrealistic. There are two main factors that will influence the success and failure of Soviet objectives in Black Africa. The first main factor is the uncertainty of Soviet willingness and capability to devote needed resources to Black Africa; the second

major factor is that the basic nature of the Black African political milieu is antithetical to Soviet success.

Africa does not enjoy a high priority on the list of Soviet global concerns. Its policy toward Africa is more accurately characterized as haphazard and reactive than planned and purposeful. Even more importantly, the USSR is faced with significant, long-lasting, and in some cases, unsolvable problems that impact heavily on Soviet ability to project power and influence.¹⁸ These economic and domestic problems are worsening in the '80's, and Soviet attention has necessarily been directed more inward than in the '60's and '70's. The USSR's faltering economy shows no signs of improvement and its agricultural sector is still rightfully described as a "basket case." In agriculture, as well as in the entire economic structure, economic decisions are based on political prerogatives that are tied directly to party goals. As long as the Soviet economic system reacts to the political system and not vice versa, the USSR will continue to encounter difficult economic problems in the years ahead. The Soviet leadership succession problem has not only curtailed Soviet initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa, but also Soviet foreign policy initiatives world-wide. While most Western analysts were surprised by the relatively sophisticated and swift transfer of power from Brezhnev to Andropov, they have been equally surprised by the inactivity and retrenchment of the USSR in foreign policy affairs since Brezhnev's death. Konstantin Chernenko has not emerged as a strong leader, and there is dispute as to who really is in charge, if anybody, in the Soviet Union. Leadership transition has certainly inhibited Soviet global adventurism and focused efforts on domestic concerns.

The USSR has a host of strategic concerns that outweigh its desire to

gain influence in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁹ The USSR must face and attempt to resolve many longstanding, incredibly complex, and hotly disputed questions with the U.S. and the West---NATO's INF deployment, breakdown of arms control talks, need for Western technology, proliferation of nuclear weapons, etc. Compounding these problems are the USSR's drain of resources in Afghanistan, continued enmity with the PRC, unrest in Poland, commitments in the explosive Middle East, continuing world disapprobation regarding the KAL aircraft shoot-down, and growing consensus that Marxism does not work. Africa is, in fact, a region that is peripheral to more essential security concerns. From the Soviet perspective, the 1980's probably will be a period of consolidation and retrenchment regarding Sub-Saharan Africa rather than a period of increased emphasis and effort.

Another major factor working against Soviet success is that the regional dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa do not work to the Soviet advantage. No world region more vividly demonstrates the dilemmas of decolonization, with its unresolved legacies of dependency, political fragmentation, and underdevelopment. Sub-Saharan Africa remains bitterly impoverished, socially chaotic, and prey to political and economic manipulation by outside forces. However, if Africa's weaknesses have facilitated great power meddling, its inherent strength and promise have also served to frustrate external actors in their search for permanent influence.²⁰ Opportunities for Soviet meddling on the scale of those provided by the wave of decolonization in the '60's or the collapse of the Portuguese empire in Southern Africa and the Ethiopian revolution during the '70's are not likely to occur in the '80's.

Sub-Saharan Africa is a chilling spectacle of absolute poverty, malnutrition, sociological imbalance, and political instability. The

dynamics of decolonization, modernization, tribal and ethnic identity, nationalism, and Black self-assertion work against the USSR. Coupled with these factors, the legacy of anti-imperialism directed against all foreign governments, the eclectic nature of African nationalism, the strong appeal of nonalignment, and the growing view that the Marxist-Leninist dialectic is inapplicable to the African scene argue against Soviet success. So far, Soviet successes have been mixed at best. African experience with almost 30 years of Soviet "fraternal assistance" has exposed many disadvantages to the Soviet aid program: an inability to back rhetoric of aid with the goods; backward technology; inferior products; poor interpersonal relations; an African awareness that Soviet activities are heavily influenced by Moscow's global rivalries; and difficulty in servicing debts to Moscow. There is little reason to believe the African situation or African perceptions of the Soviet Union will change in the mid-term.

Despite Soviet setbacks in Africa, the potential still exists for the USSR to threaten U.S. interests and policies in Sub-Saharan Africa. U.S. objectives of access to strategic minerals and oil products, free sea lanes of communications, regional stability, promoting democratic forms of government, lessening Soviet influence, encouraging removal of foreign troops, increasing trade, resolving the Namibian problem peacefully, encouraging an end to apartheid in South Africa, and encouraging Third World support in international fora often run counter to Soviet objectives. U.S. decisionmakers are better served by an awareness of Soviet objectives, strategies, and prospects in Sub-Saharan Africa before formulating policies for Africa. The U.S. must realize there are limits on U.S. influence in Africa; appreciate the African dynamic; and be patient. Even if there were no Soviet meddling in Sub-Saharan Africa, monumental

problems of impoverishment, disease, famine, instability, violence, refugees, illiteracy, and tribal conflict remain. Over the long haul, the U.S. must give the highest priority to policies of economic development for Sub-Saharan Africa while insuring the USSR understands the U.S. resolve to defend its interests in Africa. The USSR cannot match the U.S. capabilities to assist Africa, and consequently cannot confidently expect sweeping success in the mid-term.

Robert F. Collins



FOOTNOTES

1. Countries in this region are Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), Zaire, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

2. Robert J. Lilley, The Limits of Superpower Intervention: Africa, pp. 2-3.

3. Central Intelligence Agency, The World Factbook, 1983, edited by Robert A. Donaldson, pp. 192, 202, 209-210.

4. Joseph L. Noguee, The Soviet Union in the Third World: Successes and Failures, edited by Robert A. Donaldson, pp. 440-441.

5. Unpublished instructor notes compiled by author while teaching regional assessments at the USA Command & General Staff College.

6. Sam C. Nolutshungu, "African Interests and Soviet Power: The Local Context of Soviet Policy," Soviet Studies, July 1982, pp. 397-401.

7. Abbott A. Brayton, "Soviet Involvement in Africa," Journal of Modern African Studies, Volume II, 1979, p. 257.

8. Cited in David E. Albright ed., Communism in Africa, p. 42.

9. Richard E. Bissell, Communist Powers, edited by Thomas Hendricksen, p. 10.

10. Joseph P. Smaldone, Soviet & Chinese Aid to African Nations, edited by Warren Weinstein, p. 78. See military expenditure tables after footnotes.

11. Central Intelligence Agency, Communist Aid Activities in Non-Communist Less Developed Countries, 1978, p. 14.

12. Bissell, p. 12.

13. Oral Cooper & Carol Fogarty, "Soviet Economic and Military Aid to Less-Developed Countries," Soviet Policy in Developing Countries, edited by W. Raymond Duncan, p. 14.

14. Statement made by Leonid Brezhnev at XXV Party Congress, 26 February 1976.

15. Elizabeth Kridl Valkenier, "The USSR, Third World & the Global Economy," Problems of Communism, July 1979, pp. 28-32.

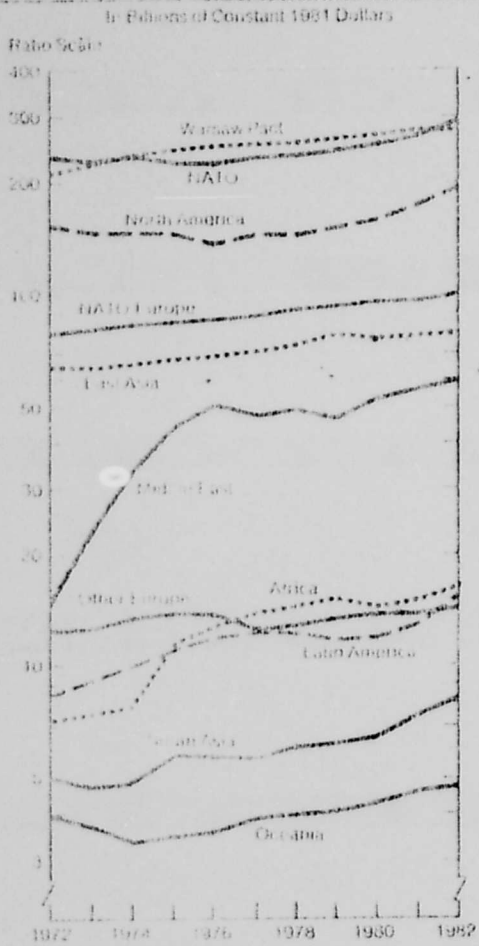
16. Bissell, p. 13
17. Communist Aid Activities in Non-Communist Less Developed Countries, p. 11.
18. For a detailed explanation of Soviet problems, see COL Robert F. Collins, "Soviet Weaknesses and Problems." Military Review, August 1983, pp. 60-72.
19. For a discussion of Soviet Objectives, see COL Robert F. Collins, "Soviet Strategic Objectives in the 1980's." Military Review, August 1982, pp. 3-12.
20. R. Craig Nation, ed., The Soviet Impact in Africa, p. 1.

Military Expenditure Tables

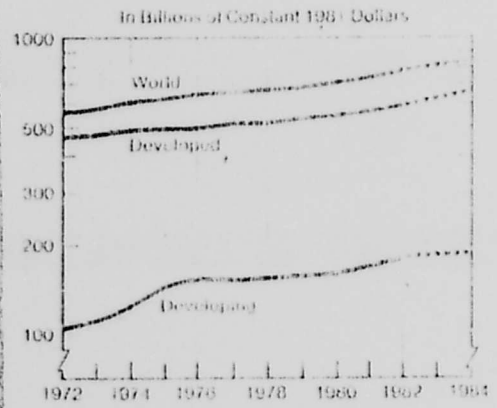
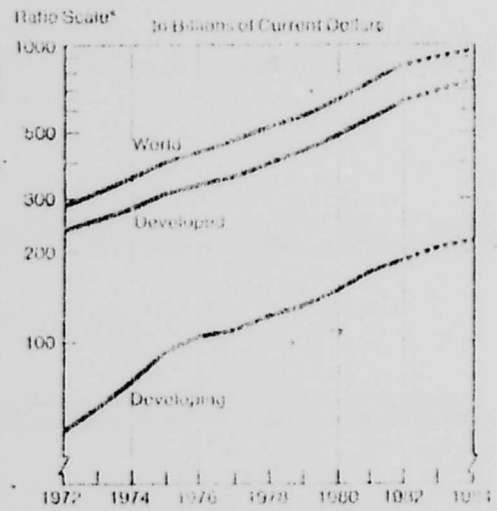
(Adapted from World Military Expenditures & Arms Transfers 1972-1982, ACDA; April 1984.)

There is a widespread opinion that Africa is an armed camp spending increasing amounts of money each year to buy arms. Statistics are used to support this contention, but the basic premise is not valid. The percentages are skewed in that the northern tier states, Libya, Egypt, and Algeria, are heavily involved in military expenditures. As the charts indicate, the Sub-Saharan states do not spend an inordinate amount for arms. Consequently, although the Soviet Union continues to be the world's top arms supplier as it has been since 1978 providing 37 percent of the transfers to developing countries in 1978-1982, the market in Sub-Saharan Africa is not statistically unusual.

Military Expenditures by Region, 1972-1982

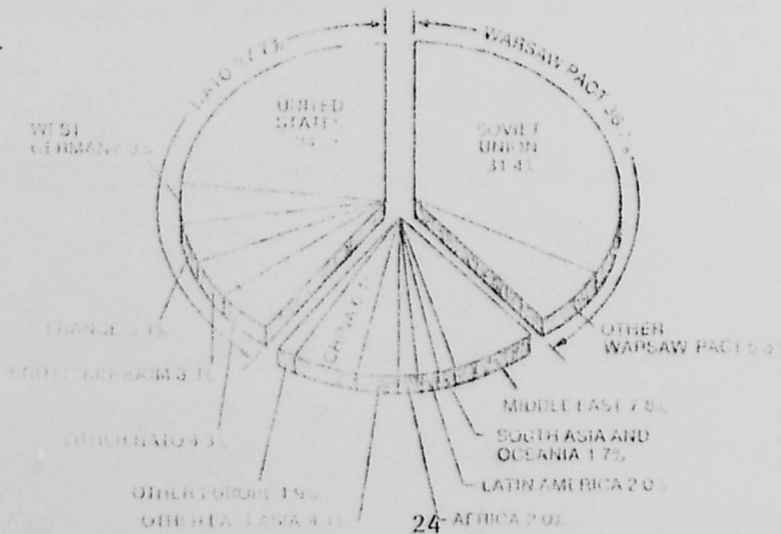


World Military Expenditures 1972-1984



*On a ratio (or semi-log) scale, an equal slope anywhere on the chart means an equal growth rate.

Shares Of World Military Expenditures, 1982



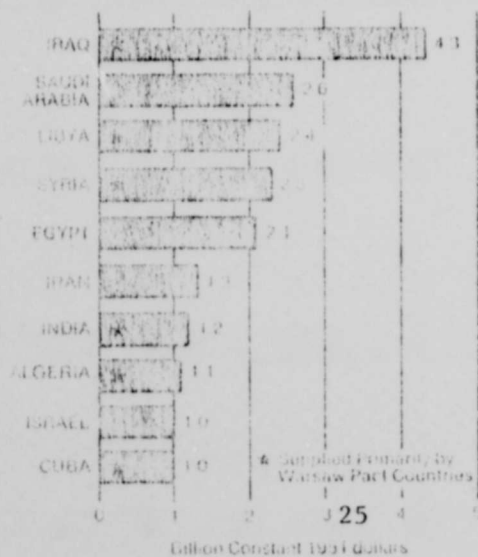
Relative Burden of Military Expenditures, 1982

ME/GNP %	GNPPER CAPITA (1981 dollars)					
	Less than \$200	\$200-499	\$500-999	\$1,000-2,999	\$3,000-9,999	\$10,000 and over
10% and over	Egypt Vietnam Zimbabwe	Lebanon Yemen (Artem)	North Korea Yemen (Sana'a)	Iraq Jordan Syria Iran Mongolia	Oman Israel Soviet Union Libya Bulgaria	Saudi Arabia Kuwait
5-9.99%	Ethiopia Guinea Bissau Chad Afghanistan	Sierra Leone Mauritania Pakistan Tanzania Guinea Liberia	Morocco Zambia Albania Honduras Egypt Nicaragua China Zimbabwe Swaziland	Taiwan South Korea Malaysia Turkey Cuba	Bahrain Poland Greece Singapore East Germany Argentina Czechoslovakia United Kingdom	United Arab Emirates United States Kuwait
2-4.99%	Burma Upper Volta Mali	Burundi Kenya Madagascar India Mozambique Equatorial Guinea Sierra Leone DRC Cape Verde Central African Republic Senegal Togo	Guyana El Salvador Thailand Indonesia Angola Sudan Botswana Philippines Nigeria	Chile Congo Peru Yugoslavia Algeria Portugal South Africa Tunisia Ecuador	Romania Hungary Uruguay Cyprus Belgium Netherlands Ghana Italy Venezuela New Zealand Spain Ireland	France West Germany Sweden Norway Denmark Australia Canada Switzerland
1-1.99%	Bangladesh Zaire	Cao Verde Principes Haiti Rwanda Camerun	Uganda Niger Papua New Guinea Cameroon	Senegal Guatemala Paraguay Jamaica Bolivia Dominican Republic Fiji	Austria Malta Japan	Luxembourg
Less than 1%	Niger	Niger Sri Lanka The Gambia	Uganda Cuba	Barbados Colombia Panama Brazil Ghana Mauritius	Trinidad & Tobago Mexico	Iceland

Percentages are listed within blocks in descending order of ME/GNP.

Blank cells are based on a reasonable presumption of one or more variables for which 1982 data or reliable estimates are not available.

Leading Arms Importing Countries, 1982



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