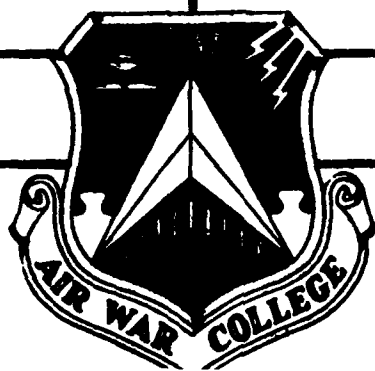


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AIR WAR COLLEGE

RESEARCH REPORT

IMPLEMENTING THE DEFENSE STRUCTURE OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES CREATING
A WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE

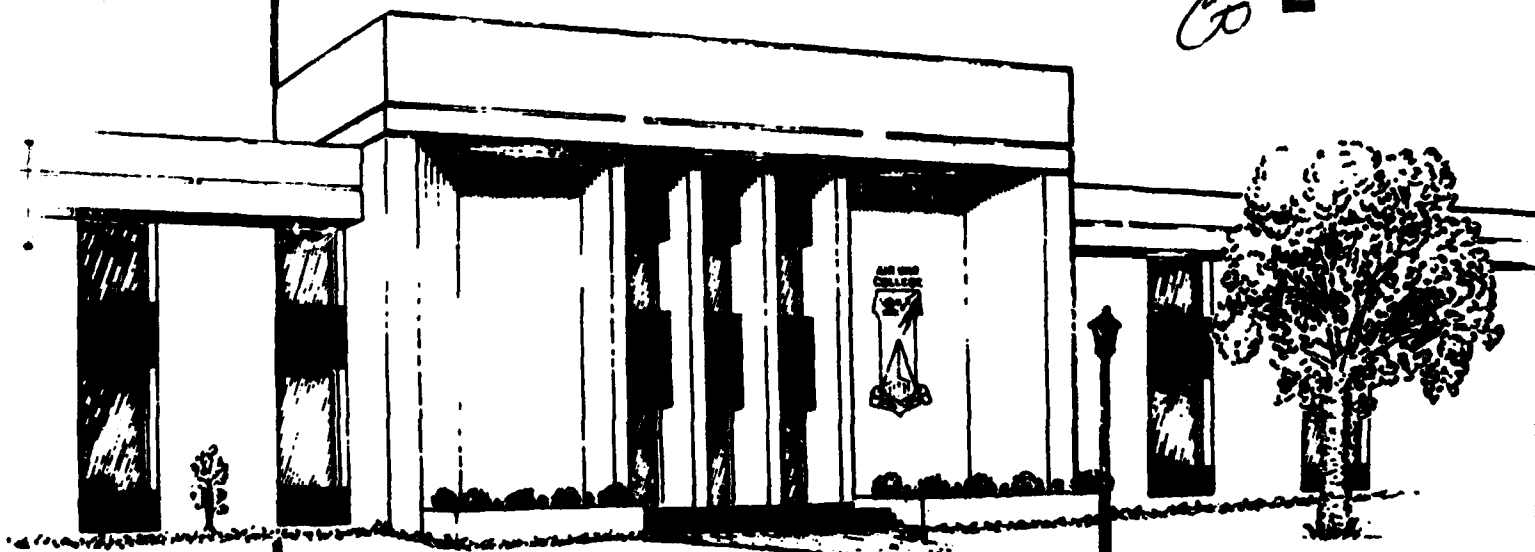
AIR COMMODORE S.E. OMERUAH
NIGERIAN AIR FORCE

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
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IMPLEMENTING THE DEFENSE STRUCTURE OF THE
ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES
CREATING A WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE

by

S. E. Omeruah
Air Commodore, Nigerian Air Force

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Thesis Advisor: Dr Dave Albright

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

MARCH 1989

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After every hard work, reward must play its own part; therefore, my appreciation must go to the following for their contributions, inspiration, and imagination. They are: G. N. Kanu, T. A. Imobgighe, Femi, and I Seehigbo. Of course, I could not have put this act together to the splendifference of my advisor Dr Dave Albright and Colonel Converse, faculty staff. They were simply marvelous.

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AIR WAR COLLEGE REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: Implementing the Defense Structure of the Economic Community of West African States Creating a West African Frontier Force

AUTHOR: S. E. Omeruah, Air Commodore, Nigerian Air Force

The (ECOWAS) Defence Pact has existed on paper for more than half a decade now. This paper seeks to analyze ways of implementing the agreement. It also looked at the Defence Pact, the external and internal threats, the inherent problems of the protocol agreement, the military capabilities of member states, and the need for such a force in the subregion. The paper then recommends a force structure and strategy that suits the organization and completely narrowed the conclusion to a practicable Air and Maritime Task Force that can easily be the precursor of the West African Frontier Force. For most of the ECOWAS countries, poverty is a common phenomenon; therefore, with the WAFF in place it will ensure security, which in turn should create a favorable climate for trade and growth of commercial ventures. It will no doubt release some money tied to the defense sector into the other developmental areas, thus injecting some capital into the economy. A West African Frontier Force is therefore desirable for ECOWAS. (S)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Air Commodore Sampson Emeka Omeruah was born in Zaria, Nigeria and serves in the Nigeria Air Force with a Combatant Commission. He had his initial cadet training in the Pakistan Military Academy from 1962, and graduated in 1965 with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. Air Commodore Omeruah attended so many courses in America and Britain ranging from Aerofuel Officers Management Course at Chanute AFB to Staff Course in Bracknell. Some of my major assignments include the Director of Administration, Nigeria Air Force Headquarters 1980-84, Minister of Information Social Development, Youth Sports and Culture 1984-85, the Military Governor of Amambra State 1985-88, Director of Personnel Nigeria Air Force Headquarters. Air Commodore Omeruah is a graduate of Air War College, class of 1989.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS for short) was established in 1976, purely for economic reasons and interests. Appendix A shows all the states that make up ECOWAS. For the past 13 years since the treaty establishing the (economic) body or organization was signed, the countries of the Community have shown only a marginal improvement in per capita incomes; they have experienced falling external demand for their exports of primary products, growing current account deficit, and mounting external debt service payments. In addition, in several countries of the Community, a combination of the weather and inappropriate incentive systems has produced a virtually stagnant agricultural sector with its attendant acute food shortages. Moreover, the high cost of energy which started with the sharp increase of prices in the mid 70s and the consequent rising of petrol import bills has produced a situation where many countries of this subregion have had to divert scarce foreign exchange proceeds needed for investment and development to other nonproductive sectors like the military and security.¹

There is no gainsaying the fact that this situation has had its telling effect on the economy of this area. For instance, between 1960-80, the Gross Domestic Product of the subregion as a whole barely kept pace with the increase in

population; however, with the exception of the Ivory Coast, Gambia, Mali, and Benin Republic, there was a general decline in the growth rate of total output in the 1970s in the ECOWAS subregion as a whole.²

While the growth of total output was generally on the decline in most of the countries of ECOWAS, their population growth rate was on the increase. The combined effect of a slowdown in economic growth and an acceleration in population growth rate has had a catastrophic effect on the standard of living of the people, which if unchecked can lead to social unrest, insecurity, and instability of governments in the region.³

Security and capital are very necessary ingredients that foster economic growth. A firm security ensures that people can go about their business free of fear and molestation. Whereas capital guarantees investments into businesses and growth of an economy. Thus, with the establishment of an ECOWAS High Command or a West African Frontier Force within this subregion, we will not only be guaranteeing security, monies meant for defense, and in many countries within the region this amounts to quite a bit, can be released and plowed back into the economy--a shot in the arm which this region badly needs.

CHAPTER II

ECOWAS DEFENCE PACT

With security in their minds and money in their eyes, the leaders of the ECOWAS countries felt that a common defense arrangement could rightly project the region as a stable environment for investment and a good number of them had toyed with the idea of a defence pact.

Antecedents of the Defence Pact

In a sense, the ECOWAS mutual defense arrangements can be said to have derived inspiration from an idea of an African High Command propagated in the continent since the late 1950s, the heyday of the effort to institutionalize the concept of Pan-Africanism.⁴ Two notable proposals to this end were Nkrumah's Continental Union Government and his African High Command--a military force to be composed of troops from independent African States. They would be charged with safeguarding peace on the African continent. In the 1960s, events in Africa such as the activities of major powers in the Congo Crisis, army mutinies in East Africa resulting in the swift dispatch of British troops to restore order in the border disputes amongst sister states, and various forms of civil strife, convinced Nkrumah that only an Army or African High Command within a continental political union could have properly intervened.⁵

The two proposals failed primarily as a result of Nigeria's opposition and success in getting a coalition of African states to support its stand. Nigeria's position was that subregional economic integration must precede political union and that such integration must proceed gradually beginning with functional cooperation and coordination and leading perhaps to a kind of common market.⁶ Nevertheless, the idea of an African High Command proved so powerful, powerful enough to be borrowed by the leaders of ECOWAS, especially as crisis in West Africa, a few years after the Lagos Treaty establishing the ECOWAS in 1976, inhibited integrated cooperative regionalism.

Crisis

There were frontier disputes among a number of ECOWAS member states. In 1974-75, border conflict between Mali and Upper Volta claimed several lives. In January 1976, Togo through advertisement in a London Times called for an adjustment of the border with Ghana. Ghana accused Togo of fomenting trouble in its Volta region and warned about the outbreak of war or hostility between the two countries. Similarly, towards the end of 1978, Senegal had a disagreement with Guinea-Bissau over an area believed to have oil deposits.⁷

Political crisis and disputes were also endemic amongst other West African States. In January 1977, following a mercenary attack on Cotonou, capital of the Republic of Benin, President Kore-Kou accused some African countries as responsible,

particularly Gabon and three other ECOWAS members--Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Togo of complicity, pressing charges at the United Nations. In September 1977, President Sekou Toure of Guinea leveled a similar accusation at Guinea-Bissau resulting in the closure of Guinea Embassy in Bissau. Nigeria, for its part, resented the idea of Togo giving asylum to General Gowon after his overthrow in 1975. Added to these disputes and suspicions was the fear harbored especially by the Francophonic countries that Nigeria--the military and economic giant of the area--might dominate the ECOWAS States. Thus, President Senghor of Senegal gave a lukewarm support to the only defense pact, only persuasion from President Houphouet Boigny of Ivory Coast, whose country resolved its difference with Nigeria over the recognition of breakaway Biafra during the Nigerian Civil War brought Senghor to accept the ECOWAS Defence Pact.

Defence Protocol Treaty

Within three years of signing the Lagos Treaty establishing the ECOWAS which contained no specific provision for cooperation in defense, the ECOWAS leaders began to work towards the removal of open aggression as a possible policy option for member states of the Community. Thus, during its 1978 meeting in Lagos, the ECOWAS Authority--the highest policy and decisionmaking body in the Community--adopted a Protocol on nonaggression intended to facilitate cooperation and create a friendly atmosphere free of any fear of attack

or aggression on any state. More specifically, all members agreed not to attack each other and to recognize the sovereignty of each state.⁸

Although it has been argued that nonaggression agreements are of doubtful value and, in fact, have not prevented military offensives, the ECOWAS Protocol on Nonaggression nevertheless represents a valuable statement of intent and a demonstration of goodwill. However, it was soon considered that, though agreement on nonaggression could help generate trust and goodwill among member countries, it was an insufficient insurance against external aggression supported by domestic insurrection and revolt. Therefore, at the Dakar Summit in 1979, the Authority noted with appreciation two defense pact proposals by Presidents Senghor of Senegal and President Eyademe of Togo and directed that the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and the Executive Secretary convene a meeting of a technical commission of experts to consider the documents and submit a harmonized draft defense pact to the next meeting. The next meeting, however, was in May 1981 and during this home summit meeting, President Seghor pushed through his views and those of his counterpart President Eyademe on the Defence Pact. The Pact was signed on 29 May 1981 by all states except three out of the sixteen states.⁹

Provisions of the Pact

The Defence Pact provides that units from the armies of ECOWAS countries will constitute the Allied or frontier forces

of the Community under a force commander, and among other things, will carry out joint military exercises. The Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs of member states will constitute a Defence Council under the current Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority. The Chiefs of Staff from each state will form the Defence Commission. A Deputy Executive Secretary is to be appointed. His functions include updating plans for the movement of troops, ensuring proper logistic support, initiating joint training exercises, preparing and managing the military budget of the Secretariat in respect to matters relating to the personnel and equipment within his jurisdiction.¹⁰

There are three categories of military action the Defence Council can take under the Pact. The guidelines are as follows:

a. Aggression from a non-member state. At the request of a member state, the Authority shall meet and decide on the expediency of a military action and entrust its execution to the force commander of the Allied Force of the Community-- Articles 6 and 16. In such a case of outright external aggression, the force will go to the defense of their member.

b. Conflict between member states. The Authority will meet urgently and take appropriate action for mediation-- Article 17. This action will be in a form of a peace-keeping force.

c. Internal conflict in a member state. When such conflict is actively maintained and sustained from the outside,

action will be taken by the Authority as in the case of external aggression; but if the conflict remains purely internal, Community forces will not intervene--Article 19.¹¹

From the ECOWAS' chequered history of disputes and conflicts, one is bound to ask if the ECOWAS Defence Pact will really contribute to regional security and security of the various member countries of the organization if it exists as it has so far, only on paper? One way to give life to the paper defense organization is to create an ECOWAS High Command or a West African Frontier Force. An actual force should be put in place even if it means starting in a modest way with a Task Force. However, before such a force can be activated, which I shall address in this paper later, it is only proper that the threat it may be confronted with should be identified and analyzed.

CHAPTER III

THE THREATS

Clearly, the leaders of West African States have shown some seriousness of purpose and resolve in endeavoring to establish the Defence Pact. However, there are still crucial obstacles and hurdles that if not identified will threaten not only the organization but the whole region if not properly identified. These threats could be external and internal.

EXTERNAL THREATS

Foreign Interests

In certain West African countries along the littoral, the presence of foreign personnel is very obvious and in certain cases there are the odd but physical presences of troops from foreign lands. The presence of these foreigners is no more evangelical as in the days of yore. They are there on economically motivated reasons, like ensuring their access to raw materials for their industries overseas. Some, like the Russians who have been stationed in Benin Republic for more than a decade next door to Nigeria, are there for strategic and ideological reasons. The vast majority are there to provide market and promote the sales of their outdated weapons and the end product of the industrial machine from the developed countries.

Foreign Intervention

"Three types of interventions have been used in the active zone of Africa," according to T. A. Imobgighe.¹² Intervention against external threat or invasion, intervention against internal collapse, and intervention due to defense interests and conflicts.¹³ Over the past decade, some Western powers have intervened in Zaire--twice in 1977 and 1978, Mauritania in 1977, and Chad in 1979, 1983, and 1987. Some other external violations also took place in November 1970 in Guinea and in Benin Republic in January 1977. French military interventions and the presence of French military personnel in and around the ECOWAS countries to strengthen French political influence and economic control in the area pose many security problems for some ECOWAS members whose only wish is to live in peace with their neighbors.

The formation of the Joint Rapid Deployment Task Force by the United States in the 1980s represented one of the Carter Administration's responses to the OPEC-induced oil price spiral and prompted some concern in the ECOWAS region.

France and the US have increased their role in Chad based in part on the suspicion that the Soviet Union was behind Gaddafi during the Libyan incursions into the territory. However, France continues to maintain military presence in almost all of her former colonies.

Soviet Influence

The spread of Communism or Socialism by the Soviets was another thorny issue the countries in West Africa and also the whole of Africa were to contend with. As Imobgighe pointed out:

Liberation movements dedicated to bring about national democratic revolutions as stepping stones on the way to socialism of the Marxist-Leninist type in a global struggle for Soviet leadership.¹⁴

From all indications, the Russian interests in this area appear to be strategically and politically motivated. The acquisition of a warm water port facility in the upper reaches of the Northeastern flank of the Atlantic Ocean will be of strategic importance. Politically, Communism has and knows no boundaries; thus, in the Soviet Union, its spread and growth should be encouraged all over the globe. This is also in keeping with her attempt to check the expansionist tendencies of the "Capitalist Imperialists."

The Russians have close ties with Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Benin Republic; all of these countries are in the West African region. Thus, it is obvious that they may want to interdict or deny oil routes and mineral supplies along the West African coast to the Western countries. Of considerable relief to the ECOWAS countries is the fact that no Soviet radical states supported directly or indirectly by Cubans with Soviet arms have succeeded in destabilizing that region.¹⁵ The Soviet Union has done nothing substantial in alleviating

the problems posed by famine in the Sahelian region of West Africa. Luckily, with the withdrawal of the Cuban forces in Angola, the Soviet influence in this subregion will diminish; however, the Soviets are adherents of Clausewitz and believe that politics is the continuation of war through other means. Consequently, the Russians must be constantly watched. With Glasnost and Perestroika, it may be much easier to decipher what they may be up to and take appropriate rearguard actions to thwart any threat.

South Africa

Most Africans see South Africa as a major threat to the whole of Africa south of the Sahara. Unfortunately, it is the economic giant of Africa and her allies are very powerful. It is also a major producer of minerals that are of great military value to the Western world. Its location--astride the route between two oceans--is of strategic importance also to the Western powers. With the huge investment by the West and some European countries, everything seems to be going well for her except, however, her apartheid policy.¹⁶

It is clearly the strongest nation south of the Sahara--militarily and economically--with well trained and well equipped personnel who have access to many modern state-of-the-art support systems and fighting platforms. Despite South African power and Western interest, what is important here is the avowed determination of the ECOWAS countries to fight the apartheid system. South Africa thus has a good reason to

threaten that region. Besides, she has recently moved into Equitorial Guinea after signing a secret contract with the government there for some fishing rights. This move has heightened the fear of the West African countries about South African intentions in that area. If South Africa with her nuclear capability is the fear in the South--Libya, the enfant terrible, generates her own fear in the North.¹⁷

Libya

In a region so vast in area, so diverse in cultures and so subject to economic inequalities and poverty, it is very difficult to build cohesion and encourage national patriotism. In a situation of abject poverty, dissension is common and the citizens can be easily manipulated by outside forces for purposes of destabilization. The social problems present a golden opportunity for Gaddafi's adventurism.

Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's Pan-Islamic ideology campaign is a threat to political stability throughout the Sahelian states and indeed ECOWAS states. Tripoli's support for foreign nationals willing to espouse revolutionary Islam and Islam fundamentalism has had diverse consequences. "In effect, Libya stands accused of manipulating Islam for purposes of territorial annexation and intervention in the affairs of its neighbors."¹⁸

Another source of worry is the problem of Libyan territorial claims, especially in Chad and Niger. The repeated attempts to project Libyan power into the domains of its Sahelian neighbors has generated considerable ill-will.

A catalog of Libyan invasions against ECOWAS and other states confirms the threat posed by Gaddafi.¹⁹

a. Chad. Aided Muslim fundamentalist factions, occupied Aouzou Strip--a border region--and intervened militarily in the civil war.

b. The Gambia. Offered military training to young Gambians and aid to subversive groups within.

c. Mali. Gave military and financial aid to Malian dissidents based in Tripoli.

d. Niger. Laid territorial claims and occupied a border post (uranium drive). Sponsored anti-Niger government broadcasts inciting Boubou and Tuareg tribes in Niger against the rulers.

e. Senegal. Encouraged the formation of an Islam fundamentalist political party known as the "Hizboulahi" (God's Party) to turn Senegal into a Muslim state and trained fundamentalist guerrillas.

f. Nigeria. Nigeria, though not directly pressured, is duly worried because it is surrounded by states threatened by Libya and it has now a moslem majority. Libya could use them to carry out subversive activities. Gaddafi apparently wishes to expand south of the Sahara and is ready to use armed force, as he has done in Chad and Niger, if need be. His merger attempts first at annexing the Aouzou in 1973 and then proposing the union of Chad and Libya in 1981, were first steps in his demented framework of a great "Jamahiriya" (state of

the masses). Nigeria played a significant role in creating ECOWAS and supports the organization financially by almost one-third.²⁰ If Gaddafi succeeds in causing trouble in Nigeria, then Nigeria might not be able to discharge her obligations to the Community, which will eventually collapse with disastrous effect. There is speculation that Gaddafi bankrolled the religious "Maitatsine" riots in the northern parts of Nigeria in 1980 and 1982, which left thousands dead.²¹

Gaddafi's methods have remained remarkably constant. He rewards his obedient clients for their willingness to accept Libyan hegemony and penalizes the recalcitrant. What the famine-stricken Sahelian states of the ECOWAS need now is peace, in order to put their economy back in gear to recovery. Gaddafi should, in the interest of peace, not turn the sub-region into another Lebanon!

Having seen the external dimensions, we can now proceed to the internal threats.

INTERNAL THREATS

Border Disputes

Africa's border problems seem worse than those of any other continent.²² The partitioning of Africa by the colonial lords seeking to create arenas for cheap raw materials and finished products disrupted the then existing ethnic and cultural kinship patterns, as borders were arbitrarily drawn. By accident of history, therefore, a permanent source of conflict exists, and ECOWAS states are victims. Major ethnic groups

here had each settled in more than one country in the region. For instance, "Fulanis" live in eight countries, viz, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria, while "Madingo" or "Madinke" tribal groups are formed in six member states of Gamia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, and Mali. Traditional boundaries were thus artificially conceived, severing the ties of kith and kin.

Colonialism further tramped upon African traditionalism "with European concepts of political, social, and economic stratification." Diversities and disparities provided breeding grounds for political factionalism and power struggle, causing instability after independence.

Just to mention a few of the frontier disputes among a number of ECOWAS member states in the last decade--1974-75, Mali and Burkina Faso; June 1976, Togo and Ghana; December 1978, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. The Nigerian/Cameroun border clashes are also a source of worry. Most of these borders are poorly demarcated, adding to the woes of the situation. Because of inadequate border patrols, smuggling has been a constant and serious problem. States are ready to settle border disputes militarily (especially with external support) when areas under dispute have economic, mineral, or oil potentials.

Invasions

A very serious threat is that of "subsidized subversion teleguided from other African states."²³ In this regard, one

can still recall the attempted invasion of Guinea in November 1970 by Portuguese-led mercenaries acting for dissidents and the mercenary invasion of Cotonou (Benin) in January 1977. These had tacit support of neighbors who offered a springboard for military activity.²⁴ This threat also emphasizes the need for joint military cooperation.

Emerging Regional Powers

Although Western neocolonialism has been one of the fears of Africans, it may be "nascent African imperialism represented by emerging regional military powers, that is the most credible threat." Uneven military growth tends to promote the chances of armed conflict as the stronger powers may seek military solutions to conflicts.

The post-independence conditions that were effective barriers to armed conflict between states seems to be thinning out with military imbalance. Those conditions were: respect for territorial integrity, the stability of borders, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, self-determination, and recourse to the OAU to mediate disputes.

Without these in practice now, these subregional stronger powers may try to influence events or intervene beyond their borders. The suspicion thus is kept vibrant.

Refugees

Fluidity of borders makes it possible for refugees to pour into neighboring affluent countries like Nigeria and Ivory Coast. During the Chadian crisis, thousands of refugees

crossed into Nigeria; this recurred in the peak of the Sahelian drought.²⁵ Subversive elements could easily infiltrate into unpoliced borders creating economic chaos and security risks for recipient nations. The dilemma is that Africans are their "brothers' keepers" traditionally. Ethnic bonds with religious fervor make the refugee issue more complex and emotional in resolving the moral and security aspects entailed. In fact, the religious riots in Kano (Nigeria) in December 1980 were attributed to these refugees.

The refugee issue can be said, therefore, to be a threat militarily, economically, and socially. Without cooperation among member nations, this could become intractable.

Internal Conflicts

Another serious security threat comes from indigenous conflicts. The Western Sahara and Chadian problems, for instance, stemmed primarily from internal causes before foreign intervention. This type of threat places more strain on sub-regional cooperation. Some of these conflicts could be state-sponsored, especially by ideological missionaries, or those who nurse territorial ambitions. Sadly enough, "African stability continues to be threatened by the internal forces of the 1960s and 1970s, forces caused by and acting as obstacles to economic development."²⁶ These forces are the state's inability to control and manage its affairs and the ever-present dominance of ethnic, tribal, and religious factors in domestic politics.

After the analysis of external and internal threats, what can we say about the teething problems that this sub-region is still confronted with up until this date.

CHAPTER IV

CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

In view of the threat described, what are the constraints, obstacles, and problems that inhibit the ECOWAS movement towards collective defense? They are political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, to military reasons.

Polarization

One central obstacle is that the armed forces of member states come from diverse colonial backgrounds, and have different traditions, languages, training, and sources of equipment. Pre-colonial days West Africa was a closely-knit entity, though without a history of cohesive development as a group. Colonialization polarized the subregion into two main colonial cultures--the French and the British. The cultural differences promote political destabilization and polarization.

Political Instability

The more than 50 successful coups in Africa resulted from many factors, but mainly three easily identifiable ones:

- a. Intra-military factors, such as military cohesion, recruitment, promotion, and deployment practices.
- b. Domestic factors, such as economic maldistribution, ethnic and class differences, internal violence, and harmful rivalries.
- c. International factors, such as external aid and "contagion" from neighboring states.

Political Insecurity

Security problems surfaced in the form of demands for self-determination, territorial claims, and crises in political leadership. They resulted in civil wars, rebellions, assassinations, military coups, and the attendant large numbers of refugees.

ECONOMICS

In terms of "socioeconomic standing" in the globe, 36 of the lowest 52 states are African, mostly from ECOWAS.

Although Africa as a whole has a per capita GNP that is less than half that of Latin America (\$723 versus \$1,651), African states spend a third more per soldier than do Latin American countries (\$8,791 versus \$6,615).²⁷

Military costs seem to have a negative effect on expenditures for health, nutrition, and education. The net result is internal tensions.

Finance thus becomes a crucial factor in having military cooperation. In case of external aggression, ECOWAS will need to pay heavily to ensure communication, transport, and infrastructures are adequate. In effect, funds for socioeconomic sectors will be diverted to arm the defense force--an expensive venture when the sound economic hopes of the Community have not been realized.

"Single sector economy" may not pay off without diversification in the long run. ECOWAS states are also beset with deterioration of exchange rates, economic crises, excessive oil importation costs for most, unreasonable rises in costs

of basic needs, problems with international monetary systems and international payments, energy crises, and exploding urban population.

ACCORDS

Bilateral military pacts between some ECOWAS states and foreign powers seem not to encourage West African military cooperation, because of pressures from their ex-colonial masters in order to safeguard existing defense arrangements. France seems to be the greatest culprit in this regard.

Two francophone groupings--the West African Monetary Union (UMOA) and the Economic Community of West Africa (CEAO)--were formed as a reaction to the ECOWAS idea and may weaken integration.²⁷ Most of the francophone states have close ties to France that may be costly for them to overlook, as the agreements may be said to be reliable and hard to replace by a new ECOWAS military alliance.

Leadership Tussle

An absence of mutual confidence among member states and possible existence of one or two countries within the organization that can be regarded as financially and militarily stronger than other, and who can provide the needed "leadership" for the others--just as the USA and the Soviet Union, for example, provide it for NATO and the Warsaw Pact also contribute to the state of noncooperation. This can be attributed to fear of what some leaders of the Community perceive as "loss of sovereignty"; but NATO and Warsaw Pact states

did not surrender or lose their sovereignty in agreeing to come together.

There is also the fear of subterranean "leadership" between Nigeria and some of the key francophone states, e.g., Senegal, Ivory Coast. This is attributable to different political background and ideological differences.

SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS

The diversity of culture, religion, and language is a potential source of misunderstanding, which on many occasions led to tensions and could rock the very foundation of the Community. This situation has not been eased by the apparent inept leadership in some of the countries.

Ethnicity is a principal determinant in political power acquisition and distribution of public "goodies" in the sub-region. It could lead to frustration which, if not contained, could result in crises, violent clashes and other manifestations of instability. This is not a conducive atmosphere for military cooperation. Ethnic conflicts and religious skirmishes are exceedingly dangerous in Africa.

MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS

According to Annette M. Seegers, there are many reasons why African states in general are reluctant to create a defensive system. A few of them are technical difficulties (standardization of equipment, training, and organizational procedures), fear of loss of sovereignty, as earlier mentioned, and the "number of coups that propelled the African military

to political prominence--and the political civil leaders that were reluctant to relinquish political control over their military establishments."

Equipment

Equipment choice will pose a problem as proliferation of systems is the order of the day in the Community. Nigeria, for example, has aircraft in inventory from the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, Holland, West Germany, the US, Italy, and Czechoslovakia; while other member states purchase theirs from France, the US, China, Switzerland, Brazil, Canada, the Soviet Union, etc. Which equipment will be chosen then? Also, foreign groups continue to assail the Community with weaponry of all types--which places a premium on "competence at the expense of expedience" and needs of its citizens. The Soviet Union will continue "its search for influence, France for markets, the US for local allies." Thus, the conflicting collection of equipment becomes a source of constraint with weapon systems.

Logistics

Even sophisticated equipment and firepower may not prove reliable in combat, considering the existing logistics problems within the Community in maintenance and resupply capabilities. The lack of technical expertise now becomes another constraint of significance.

Training and Operations

Hundreds of foreign military advisors, instructors, technicians, etc., are in the subregion from various countries and are involved in training indigenous military forces. Harmonizing all these sources of influence is also a constraint in military cooperation endeavors. These experts or specialists themselves even compound training efforts by underestimating the problems in recipient countries with their logistical problems, cumbersome bureaucracies, diverse physical environmental conditions, and different standards of discipline. Organizational procedures for training and operations are not too streamlined either.

DOCTRINE

Doctrine influences the preparation for and conduct of national defense by "guiding procurement and weapons acquisition, rationalizing organizational structure, and guiding employment in battle operations." The subregion's doctrine, especially in the francophone states, might be to delay the aggressor and protect key national installations until France arrives. This is at variance then with the aspirations of ECOWAS. Another constraint is in implanting European models that are practically unsuitable in Africa. ECOWAS states' doctrinal beliefs, if any, are not based on the subregion's missions and effective model. Emphasis has been on acquiring sophisticated equipment that may not be "combat reliable" because of inherent logistics problems mentioned above and

the doctrine to employ it efficiently. What exists doctrinally now are just security statements that are difficult to put into operation because the local environmental situation is not a prime consideration.

What then are we to conclude about these problems?

DESIRED COOPERATION

The thrust of the analysis is that these problems, which are "more or less inevitable," cannot be solved by refusing to come together. A solution hinges on the desire to unite and get organized just as NATO and other defense organizations have done. These alliances did not wait until they eliminated language diversities, and all training, operations, equipment and weapons were standardized before coming to an agreeable military cooperation. It was President Leopold Senghor of Senegal, while addressing the Summit of ECOWAS, who said:

The problems of logistics, standardization of weapons and training programs, language barrier, and ideological differences can best be tackled within the medium of a collective defense system, not outside it.²⁸

It is unrealistic therefore for ECOWAS states to think that these diversities and problems can be resolved without first accepting the idea of a joint defense system. Therefore, let us now appraise the deployable forces within ECOWAS countries, from where we can draw troops for the West African Frontier Forces.

CHAPTER V

APPRAISAL OF DEPLOYABLE ECOWAS FORCES

Some of the Armed Forces of ECOWAS countries are still intact professionally and well trained. Others have been badly affected by the political situation of their countries. It will be appropriate to look critically at the various forces that are fit for deployment in some ECOWAS countries. Bruce E. Arlinghaus' and Pauline H. Baker's assessments are as shown below briefly.²⁹

GROUND FORCES

Nigeria

Clearly the dominant force in the area, Nigeria's 94,000-man army is the second largest force in sub-Saharan Africa. As a result of avoiding tying itself to one supplier, the army has created a lack of homogeneity in equipment. In terms of defending territorial integrity, Nigeria's army has the advantage of being surrounded by smaller and weaker states.

Ghana

The 10,000-man army was once considered professional and disciplined, but a series of lower-echelon coups and coup attempts has doubtless severely damaged the command structure. The army lacks offensive capability. Until discipline and a chain of command are restored, the acquisition of new equipment will be a wasted effort.

Guinea

The 8,500-man army has sought to end its near-total reliance on Soviet equipment and training by opening to the West. It has demonstrated an ability to intervene in neighboring states (at the invitation of the host government), for example, in 1979 in Liberia.

Senegal

The 8,500-man army has an enormous advantage in command experience and training because it was the backbone of the French colonial army, the "Compagnie de Tirailleurs Senegalais," and can defend its borders adequately against its immediate neighbors.

Mauritania

Mauritania finds its small army placed in the role of buffer between the Moroccan Arab-Berber north and black Africa, and occasionally caught between Morocco's well-disciplined forces and the POLISARIO guerrillas. It continues to suffer the adverse effects of a recruiting tradition that draws officers primarily from the Arab north and enlisted men from the black population in the south.

Guinea-Bissau

The army evolved from a successful 11-year guerrilla struggle against Portugal and seems capable of providing internal security, as well as adequate defense against its immediate neighbors.

Ivory Coast

The Ivorian military is well-trained, professional, and does not suffer from the ethnic recruiting patterns that threaten stability elsewhere. The army appears adequate for providing internal security and could provide adequate defense of vital internal areas until external (presumably French) help arrives.

Benin

Benin's colonial ties and military orientation remain French, although a Soviet inroad has been added. The nation's poverty prevents much modernization.

Liberia

The 1980 coup in Liberia destroyed what military discipline and training existed in the army. The authority of the officer corps collapsed as privates and sergeants became majors and colonels overnight. The breakdown at the top inevitably led to the disintegration of training, maintenance, and logistical capabilities.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone's army is one of the better trained and disciplined in West Africa, and remains remarkably British in its traditions, despite more than ten years of independence.

Gambia

As part of its confederation with Senegal, Gambia has reorganized its security forces into a "gendarmerie" and the army on the Senegalese design.

Mali

Remains largely tied to Soviet military equipment although some Western equipment has reportedly begun to arrive. Given the extensive territory it must secure and the army's limited mobility, it is not capable of providing more than point defense.

Niger

The small army faces problems similar to Mali, and finds itself a potential barrier to Gaddafi's attempts to dominate the Sahel region. It is well trained, fairly equipped, and mobile in a disciplined, light infantry force.

Togo

The small but disciplined Togolese army appears capable of providing reasonably adequate internal security, but relies principally on France for training and equipment.

Burkina Faso

The 3,700-man army is fairly well-equipped by France, fairly well-disciplined, but with no prospect for modernization or mobility improvement except on a grant-aid basis.

SEA FORCES

Details of the naval assets of the ECOWAS countries are listed in Appendix D. The objectives and missions of the ECOWAS states' navies are to protect coastal defenses, enforce maritime regulations, conduct search and rescue operations, and protect fishing and mineral resources in their economic zones. The problems in achieving the objectives stem from

"shortages of skilled manpower, lack of adequate training, organizational infrastructural difficulties, poor logistics, and maintenance problems."³⁰ Not only is it expensive to build, man, and maintain a navy, it is also expensive to operate one in the face of growing poverty.

Policing economic zones requires sea and air protection that is not within easy reach of the capabilities of their navies. Only Nigeria and Ivory Coast possess surface-to-surface missile platforms, while Benin, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, and Togo have torpedoes. Although ECOWAS navies do not possess submarines, "great equalizers"--sophisticated missiles and fast-attack aircraft--are being acquired for protection of vital economic zones. When properly maintained and well-manned, fast-attack craft "can change the equation of naval power in the international arena." They have been described as the "pocket battleship of the missile era." Thus, these navies have access to a relatively low-cost craft with "significant defensive and offensive capabilities."

AIR FORCES

See Appendix D for full details of air assets of ECOWAS countries. In a typical ECOWAS setting, fighting over vast distances, devoid of rivers, parched deserts, featureless terrains, and roadless forests, make airpower a must. Identifiable weaknesses in the air forces of the subregion are: "heavy utilization rates, maintenance failures, logistic problems, and combat losses."³¹ The above-mentioned problems can reduce

these air forces to an ineffective level in a war. Worse still, without an indigenous production capability, equipment attrition becomes an almost insurmountable problem. As long as these countries are dependent on outside suppliers, the use of airpower will be limited in most conflicts. It can, therefore, be assumed that external assistance will be the primary factor in development of the subregion's air forces.

Military expenditures make this dependence more involving on outside military and economic aid; dependence that is difficult increasingly to sever. Such is the dilemma of ECOWAS military trends.

In sum, the four critical elements of military capability--force structure, modernization, readiness, and sustainability--seem to be problematic in the subregion. Manpower and equipment are vital components; but such "intangibles" as morale, discipline, leadership, and levels of training are also necessary to achieve a combat capable force.

Appendix D shows the order of battle of ECOWAS member states. We shall now examine the organization of the force and its strategy.

CHAPTER VI

FORCE ORGANIZATION AND STRATEGY

Since strategy to my mind is the distribution and application of military means and assets to achieve policy objectives, the most appropriate and desirable strategy of the West African Frontier Force would be that of deterrence as contained in the ECOWAS Defence Pact.³² The force structure would be such that it would deter any would-be aggressor. Should deterrence fail, an attack on any state will be regarded and tantamount to an attack on all member states. Consequently, such an attack must be repulsed and the situation must be brought to a condition favorable to ECOWAS.

Deployment Strategy

It is obvious from our arguments so far that a force within this region is necessary. However, it is also essential to critically examine two options available before embarking on the sectoral allocation of forces. The options are:

a. The establishment of a standing force that would act as a deterrent force and be available for immediate response to an attack.

b. The development of intervention forces by each nation for quick operations in their various states.

The first option though may involve a huge expenditure or financial outlay, but the force would be in strength, which is in agreement with one of the essential principles of war--

concentration of forces. The second option may not look that expensive but the forces are still small, dissipated, and nothing has changed from the present situation. It still provides the enemy the weaknesses that have beleaguered this region for a long time. The ECOWAS states therefore must resolve to recreate a standing force for credible deterrence.

SECTORS

The ECOWAS countries will be divided into three sectors for the purpose of the deployment of WAFF forces. See Appendix B for full details. There will be the Western, Central, and the Eastern Sectors of Command. The sectors have been divided or partitioned in such a manner that they cut across all linguistic and tribal groupings. The headquarters of the forces will still remain in Lome which is the ECOWAS headquarters for easy communication and administration. The sectors will have equal strength of Army, Air Force, and Naval assets.

Strength of the Force

If the forces in ECOWAS countries are mustered together, they will easily provide about six composite divisions with all the necessary accoutrements.³³ It is necessary as has been said earlier to have these forces in strength since their major task or objective is that of deterrence and if that fails, fight a conclusive war to its logical end. Therefore, each sector will have two of these divisions. Thus, we will have two divisions in Eastern, Central, and Western sectors. Each division group will consist of three brigades with all the

supporting elements. The Naval Wing will consist of patrol boats and the Air Wing will operate with helicopters and fixed wings capable of carrying out armed attack and rapid airlift.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The allocation of responsibilities will be based on the relative strength of the member states armed forces. All countries except Gambia can contribute at least Army units up to two battalion strength. The airpower contribution can be made by seven countries and they are: Nigeria, Ghana, Mauritania, Mali, Guinea, Senegal, and Ivory Coast. The naval contributions can be made by eight countries: Nigeria, Ghana, Mauritania, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Senegal, and Ivory Coast.³⁴

Since countries like Benin, Togo, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso cannot make any effective contribution to the air and naval efforts without denigrating their national defenses, they should contribute most of the ground troops.

The supporting units could then come from countries with a viable economy and more recent experience in warfare. Such countries are: Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Mauritania, Guinea, and Ghana. The Air Wing helicopters should be provided by Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Senegal; while the fast patrol boats and ships would be drawn from Nigeria, Ghana, Mauritania, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, and Ivory Coast.

Each nation in the Community would still be expected to create a cell of Rapid Intervention Force within their national armies ready to be deployed at the shortest possible notice to supplement the standing force if more assistance is needed and to be used for their internal security.

Location of Forces

As Commander G. N. Kanu in his paper suggested: "The forces should be located along the coastal areas of the sub-region since most of the industrial and capital cities of most member states are located along the coast." The forces could be divided into three self-sustaining sectors with their headquarters located at Senegal, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria comprising the Western Sector, Central Sector, and Eastern Sector respectively, since it is not practicable to have effective surveillance along the vast coastline if all the forces are colocated.

The Air and Naval Wings should follow the same pattern of division and each composite force will have its own area of operation.

COMMAND AND CONTROL

There should be in each location a Forces Commander who will be responsible to the overall ECOWAS Forces Commander stationed in Togo. Since the alliance must exist under the aegis of the ECOWAS authority, a decisionmaking system capable of responding to any emergency will be evolved.

A full complement of military staff at the ECOWAS Secretariat is therefore needed, with a 3-star general advising the Secretary-General on military options in any given situation, and the overall Commander of WAFF. If the meeting of Heads of State cannot be convened immediately, the Council of Ministers for defense will take appropriate decisions on their behalf. The Heads of Governments may rescind any decision at their next emergency meeting.

A Defence Council comprising Chiefs of Armies of member states will review the training and equipment standard of the forces and advise on security assessments. It will also arrange regular meetings of the various armed forces through interstate military sports, joint exercises, and training.

Troop Requirement

The type of troops or forces required will be such that they may be easily and readily deployed anywhere in the sector; thus, the forces must be highly armed units with strong counterinsurgency skills.³⁵ Modest force modernization efforts will concentrate on upgrading, transportation, communications, and engineering capabilities while working on a practical logistic support system.

An integrated ECOWAS force would train together, be equipped with standard weapons, and would collectively defend common sea lanes and other interests.

LOCAL MISSION

WAFF units' doctrine must be based on African missions and effective African models without copying foreign ones. The doctrine to be developed should influence the preparation for and conduct of common defense by guiding procurement and weapons acquisition, organization structure, and force employment in battle.

The Nigerian military has been used in domestic situations on an emergency basis; such as the 1973 census, for traffic control, and for clearing the congested ports during the "cement armada."³⁶ While the success of those efforts may be questioned; suffice it to note that these are examples of roles the ECOWAS force could be used for in a national crisis situation. This "African solution" in grave situations should be reflected in the doctrine.

There is no doubt that such a force that has been postulated in this paper, with its huge financial demand and other convoluting problems may look rather distant and theoretical. To buttress my point on the practicability of this proposal, I will go further to suggest a precursor to this force as a test case--an Air and Maritime Task Force--which I think is not only feasible, but there is need for it now. However, before essaying into the narrowing down of my proposal, I will like to discuss the advantages and financing of this force.

CHAPTER VII

ADVANTAGES OF FORCE AND ITS FINANCING

ADVANTAGES

Coups

When one takes stock and an unbiased account of the chequered political history of the countries in ECOWAS, a keen observer will discover to his chagrin that the political evolution or growth is stunted and riddled with coups by the military of these countries. Except Ivory Coast, all other countries have experienced very many styles and types of military takeover. The main reason for these takeovers stem from the large and idle military forces maintained by these countries. With the formation of a large and looming West African Force, ECOWAS countries will be forced to reduce their forces and in certain cases, there will be no need for a military force in some countries, rather the police force would be beefed up to maintain law and order. Thus, the incidents of coups and military takeover will be reduced, if not completely eliminated. This will allow democracy to thrive and evolve in this region for a stable government will reestablish security in the area, which is a sinequanon for any form of economic growth.

Regional Economy

The economic situation in this region is to say the least in dire straits. The general or global depression is

felt more in this area of the world. The people still are in conditions that can best be described as primitive with hunger and famine as the order of the day. Thus, any amount of money that can be injected into the poor economic situation existing in this area would be most welcome. As of now, it is estimated that about 34 percent of the total budget of the West African Region goes into defense.³⁷ If the West African Frontier Force is put into place, it will cut down this state of affairs by over 18 percent. With this amount plowed back into the economy for another five years, it is very possible that the economic recovery in this area will no more be a dream.

Defendable Area

A glance at the map of this area in Appendix A will give one a clear view of the integral nature of the subregion. Apart from the land area, the subregion offers virtually a continuous and flowing coastline. The littoral of the countries therein varies from as little as 40 to 50 miles from Benin Republic to some 400 miles in the case of Nigeria. Traversing from one territorial sea/EEZ to another becomes in some cases a matter of some paltry shipboard hours or some few minutes of aircraft time.³⁸ Geographically, it is an area that could easily be defended if the defenses are well coordinated. The weather in the subregion is very similar for aircraft operations. This geographical contiguity can play a part in the garrisoning of the area as it did during the advent of the colonizers. The boats that brought nations like Portugal,

Germany, Britain, and France followed the coastline along the littoral. These countries that exploited the resources of the ECOWAS region should now chip in to provide some of the finances that would also guarantee free trade.

FINANCES

Local

Member states will contribute in a regular basis to the ECOWAS fund. The cost of operating and maintaining the force with all the necessary equipment will be borne by the ECOWAS authority. Each country will contribute on a pro rata basis and specific contributions will be worked out by the ECOWAS Secretariat and approved by the ECOWAS authority.³⁹

To relieve all states of foreign exchange burden, the troops' salaries should be paid in their local currency into individual home accounts. However, ECOWAS funds will look after the feeding, maintenance allowance, and the general administration of the troops.

While it is recognized that this approach will be expensive, it seems to me a more meaningful proposal if the pact is to stand the test of time. There is no apparent choice to follow than the fact that if you want peace, you must prepare for war. Security does not come cheap. The joint security arrangement envisaged here may in the long run prove to be cheaper than if individual states had pursued their own security alone.

Foreign Aid

With the emergence of new nation-states, the bipolar nature of the world had changed giving way to multipolarity of world powers. Thus, in a way, nations including the world powers are becoming more interdependent. Therefore, they need to seek help from the following countries for obvious reasons:

a. USA. The US is the protector of the democratic world.⁴⁰ It has so far helped the NATO countries because of its interest there. There may not be the same strategic interest in West Africa; all the same, there are some minerals it may need. Besides, West Africa provides a very favorable market for the US goods. To promote these interests, the US should see that this region is secure. This will ultimately help to promote democracy in this area of the world.

b. EEC. The EEC countries (and quite a good number of them had been the colonial warlords of these countries, cutting away a substantial amount of its resources in the days of yore) should now come forth and chip in on the defenses of this area which is in a way affiliated to them.

c. Arabs. The Arabs can promote Afro-Arab political solidarity by investing surplus capital from oil-rich Arab states in the economic development of the subregion since most of the ECOWAS citizens are affiliated to Arabs by religious ties, which are of prime importance in Arab thinking.

d. Libya. Libya should be asked to donate its extra finances to the defense of the Moslem brothers in this area and to cease to be a threat to it. Gaddafi should know that the ECOWAS defense organization is a serious affair, since any incursion on any member state will be an attack on all. He cannot afford to pay the political price in the future if he continues discountenancing this factor.

3. Brazil. Brazil is making inroads into Africa, which expects her to produce contributions to strengthen the ties. Her foreign policy is conducive to an African setting--Brazil "does not export ideology or impose political preconditions."⁴¹ Brazilian technology and products are suitable for African application also. A country like Nigeria that is "pivotal in Brazil's African relations" could be in the best position to exert influence to assist the ECOWAS defense, Brazil being the sixth largest exporter of arms in the world, as a way of cutting down the proliferation of different weapon systems.

Ways Brazil can contribute to ECOWAS include: extending export credits for military equipment, technology of the aviation industry, enrolling member states' students in her military academies and technical training institutions.

Brazil is a "natural partner" because of the African cultural roots of the country as culture and race are significant sources of affiliation in an African world.

If the Brazil-Africa link falls short of mutual advantage, the viability of African attempts to find Third World alternatives for their development

and security needs can be thrown into serious question.⁴²

f. Nigeria. Apart from moral and financial support to ECOWAS, what has Nigeria got to offer in the immediate future? The Defense Industries Corporation (DIC) in Nigeria now assembles rifles, 9mm pistols, 60mm and 81mm mortars, and their ammunition. The corporation could form the nucleus of intra-region armament equipment standardization, with each member state contributing personnel for research and development.

The country has about seven auto and truck assembly plants, including PEUGEOT, which francophone countries can easily identify with. They could serve for vehicle standardization starting with the assemblage of armored fighting and cross-country vehicles at STEYR Motors in the country.

The scientists of "Biafra" during the Nigerian civil war are still available. Their ingenious adaptations in the science of petroleum chemistry and engineering led them into building local refineries for sufficiency in kerosene, petrol, diesel, and aviation fuel. They also developed a high quality armament, such as "OGBUNIGWE" mortar bombs and flying rockets. They could form the nucleus of scientists for an ECOWAS arms manufacturing body.

Nigeria has a military academy (The Nigerian Defence Academy) built over fifteen years ago and has trained over 3,000 officers for her armed forces. It is not being converted into a technical university. ECOWAS can use this as

a main source of their officer corps training, instead of going abroad. So also are Nigeria's National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Command and Staff College, various Army schools, and the Air Force primary and basic flying schools and technical academies.⁴³

Having discussed the advantages of this proposal and the various ways it could be financed, let's now narrow it down to a small but practicable beginning--the Air and Maritime Task Force--this will serve as a precursor to the West African Frontier Force.

CHAPTER VIII

AIR AND MARITIME TASK FORCE

THE NEED FOR AN AIR/MARITIME TASK FORCE

It is obvious from the threat factors and the economic problems of this subregion that a need for an air and maritime task force cannot be overemphasized. Even occurrences in the recent past adumbrates this assessment. For instance, there was the abortive invasion of Sierra Leone by some British mercenaries who sailed in to topple the government of that country in February 1986. Illegal oil lifting still goes on, fish poaching is the order of the day, and occasional high-jacking of shipborne goods has taken place on the territorial seas of some of these countries.⁴⁴

Each country within its limitations has been pursuing measures on their own to counter such threats and occurrences. But these efforts have been to each according to its capability, which has not completely tackled the problems. Rather, it has only succeeded in dissipating energies of these poor countries. Against the backdrop of the sophistication of these poachers in the sea and traffickers in the Carribic, it would not be out of place to look at the security and economic advantage of an Air/Maritime Task Force.

Air and Maritime Force Levels

Before going further into the postulation of the force and its force level, it is essential to make certain assumptions.

Two main languages (English and French) apart from the local dialects, are widely spoken in this subregion. Thus, communicating with each other in the same tongue would not constitute an obstacle, besides the various airport towers in the region are manned presently by bilingual controllers. Within the military, the officers and ranks are all encouraged to learn the two languages as part of the ECOWAS Defence Pact agreement.

The major problem, however, will be that of communication equipment between aircraft and ships. That can be overcome by adjustments of the various instruments since the countries involved buy their equipment mainly from the British, French, and the American countries. Exercises between Nigeria/Togo on one hand and Nigeria/Ghana have confirmed this assumption. However, some of the larger and more advantaged countries would bear more of the load. The burden sharing would be pro rata. Also, all ECOWAS countries' capitals have a direct line to ECOWAS Headquarters by radio and telephone.

The Headquarters of ECOWAS and the skeletal staff of Allied Armed Forces⁴⁵ of ECOWAS are at Lome Togo as of now, and that would be the coordinating headquarters of the Task Force. The strength of the armed forces of some of the ECOWAS countries, particularly those along the coastline, can be found in Appendix D. The maritime patrol aircraft in Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, and Sene-Gambia will be attached and in direct support of Togo. Each detachment will, however, be stationed in their various countries.

Detachment commanders will from time to time liaise with the ECOWAS Headquarters in Lome Togo. Situation reports on a daily basis will be sent to the Lome headquarters.

MODE OF OPERATIONS

The modus operandi of the various detachments in the ECOWAS countries would be very simple. Bearing in mind the policy of non-interference and the strategy of deterrence, as contained in the ECOWAS Defence Pact, the detachments will carry out overlapping air patrols (see Appendix C).⁴⁶ This will ensure a complete coverage of the littoral. The general procedure would be, for example, when an illegal activity is sighted by aircraft on a maritime patrol such a report should be passed on to the ship in those waters to effect a chase. Such an aircraft would circle and provide accurate guidance to the intercepting ship or patrol boat before returning to base. Once it crosses her country's border while on patrol, it should report to the control tower in the country where the aircraft is operating. If, however, a fishing trawler is found poaching in Ghana waters and succeeds during a chase in escaping eastward, say into Togo or Benin or Nigeria's waters, the chasing boat should not violate the other country's waters; rather, it should immediately report the situation to the headquarters or to ships of neighboring countries, if in contact, for their appropriate apprehension action. Cost of aircraft servicing and maintenance of ships will continue to be borne by host nation. The advantages to be gained from an integrated air

and maritime surveillance--its security and economic implications will more than offset the magnitude of the maintenance costs. The other spin offs would be the preservation of the sea resources, there will be encouragement of bilateral and multilateral cooperation among the countries and above all it will reduce any military posturing in the area and enhance the credibility of deterrence in the whole region. This Task Force can take off now. It should serve as the basis for the formation of the West African Frontier Force.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

CONCLUSION

ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established in 1976, purely for economic reasons and interests. The hopes and ideals of the ECOWAS treaty signed thirteen years ago have not been realized. A combination of unfavorable circumstances has produced virtually a stagnant agriculture with its attendant food shortages. There is no gainsaying the fact that this situation has had its effect on the subregional economy. Population in this area has continued to grow and the GDP has continued to decline with its disastrous economic consequences. The slow growth of economy exacerbated by the population explosion can lead to social unrest. Therefore, the establishment of ECOWAS High Command or the West African Frontier Force (WAFF) will provide security in the area and release some money from reduction of forces in ECOWAS countries as a direct result of the formation of the ECOWAS forces into the economy of the region.

Defence Pact

Leaders in ECOWAS countries have hitherto discussed the importance of an ECOWAS Force. The ECOWAS Defence Pact is a true testimony of their good intentions. Nkrumah's Union Government and the talk of an African High Command did

not see the light of the day due to the fierce opposition from sister countries. However, the idea that was propagated then found acceptance among the ECOWAS countries. The crisis in the area fueled the need for a joint force; this led to a defense protocol treaty in Dakar in 1979. However, the treaty was finally passed in May 1981 with only three abstentions.

The Pact made provision for ECOWAS authority, a Defence Council, and a Deputy Executive Secretary--a military top brass that will own the Force. The Pact further laid a lot of emphasis on the powers of the Authority. These guidelines will streamline the mode of operation of the Force. The threat to the region was critically examined.

Threat

Under threat analysis, the external threats are seen as foreign interests, foreign interventions, and Soviet influence. Even within Africa, the extra-regional threats are Libya and, of course, South Africa. Foreign presence within the Community is to serve their own interests and not necessarily for the ultimate good of ECOWAS. Any foreign intervention by "do-gooders" is anti-OAU, and, therefore, a threat, except under the auspices of that body. Foreigners have intervened in Mauritania, Chad, Guinea, and Benin. Soviet imperialism is also a threat since it encourages "liberation movements" while their assistance is to offer guns instead of bread. This is not in the interest of the famine-ravished Sahelian belt of the region.

South Africa, to all Africans, is arch enemy number one, but is supported by the Western world because of its strategic location and immense strategic mineral resources needed by the West.

Libya under Gaddafi has territorial ambitions to build an Islamic empire, fuels dissent in the Community under the guise of religion and kinship, destabilizes regimes with its immense wealth in the subregion, exports untenable ideology, and still occupies the Aouzou strip of Chad. Libya has been a threat to Chad, Gambia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, and to Nigeria indirectly.

Internal threats come in various forms, such as border disputes, "subsidized subregion" incursions masterminded from other states like the attempted invasion of Guinea and Benin, emerging regional powers that promote the chances of armed conflict to settle disputes, refugees who undermine the social, economic, and security pillars of recipient states and are there illegally, and, finally, internal conflicts based on ideological quests or territorial ambitions.

Problems

The major constraints, obstacles, and problems that ECOWAS faces to realize collective defense were identified. They are: polarization by colonial masters that divided the subregion into francophone, anglophone, and Portuguese areas of influence; ethnic, cultural, religious, and ideological differences that lead to political instability, political

insecurity, and coups; economic factors of unfavorable exchange rates, excessive oil importation costs, international debts and payments, energy crisis, and exploding urban population.

Others are accords and leadership tussles. The military areas for concern are technical difficulties without standardization of equipment, training and organization, logistics, and lack of doctrine. It was emphasized that these inevitable problems can best be tackled within the framework of a collective defense system, not outside it.

Appraisal of Deployable ECOWAS Forces

The military capabilities of member states were looked into with the sad conclusion that the effectiveness of their conventionally equipped forces is hampered sometimes by politicized leadership, poor discipline, inadequate training, and equipment that is of diverse origins, compounded by limited quantities of spares and technical expertise. The mission and role of preserving internal order mostly has always prevailed. The sea and air forces also hinge on external dependence for expertise and supplies except in one or two states.

Force Organization and Strategy

The paper proposed a concept of defense for ECOWAS based on a linkage system whereby a member state under aggression would be assisted quickly. The merits and disadvantages of the two options preferred were identified--for a standing force for the frontline defense of the Community, and an Intervention Force for quick response by member state on request.

A two-division strength with complements of naval and air wings was proposed in each of the sectors. Contributions for airpower and sea wing would come from eight and seven countries respectively, while those that cannot make any effective air and naval contribution--Benin, Togo, Niger, Sierra Leone, and Burkina Faso--without denigrating their national defense should contribute most of the ground troops. The forces, to be divided into three self-sustaining sectors, would be headquartered at Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Nigeria. The air and naval wings would follow the same pattern with each composite force having its own area of operation.

It was opined that each location should have a forces commander responsible to the overall ECOWAS Forces Commander. In an emergency, Ministers would decide on a course of action on advice from overall forces commander, with such action to be rescindable by heads of state if necessary at next emergency meeting. Regular sports, joint exercises, and training were also suggested. Rules for payment of troops and compensation were also mentioned.

Advantages and Finances

The advantages of such a force and its financing were discussed. The gains from such a force in the region will far outweigh the envisaged problems. For instance, such a force will force a drawdown or reduction in troops of various countries, thereby reducing if not eliminating the incidents of coups that have disrupted the peace and political evolution

of this area. Peace is very essential for economic growth.

The economy in this area is highly depressed. The ever-increasing defense budget in most of the states has hindered economic and social programs. If such a force is put in place, it will radically reduce the 34 percent of the total annual budget in this region that usually goes to defense. Such an amount can be put back into the economy of the area to help bolster or resuscitate its investment capability.

A cursory look at the topography of the general area will show how contiguous the region is. Some of the countries in this area have narrow littoral and some have very wide and large bodies of water or coastline to contend with. From the military standpoint, the area can easily be defended if the forces are provided with the right equipment and are well trained.

Finances

Another vexing element was the best way to finance the huge cost such a force will demand. Various methods and options were considered. They included the need for countries to contribute their dues on a pro rata basis for the upkeep of the force. With the interdependence of nation-states in the world body politics, it would not be out of place to seek for and obtain foreign aid to augment whatever finances we have. The US as the protector of the democratic world

should be interested in the plight of the people in this region. Members of the EEC who were once the colonial masters of the countries in this area should without much prompting respond too to a people they had trade links with. The Arab countries, Libya, and Brazil can individually contribute in a positive manner to the economic development and the funding of the Force. Nigeria's defense industries can provide a substantial amount of war equipment from the defense industries there.

Since the cost of putting the Force in place would be initially prohibitive, it was thought that for practical reasons the ECOWAS authority should begin by creating an Air and Maritime Task Force. The need for this task force as of now is overwhelming, particularly if one considers the amount of money on a daily basis that is going to fish poachers, pirates on the high seas, and illegal oil lifters. Barring the teething problems of a newly organized force, the task force is presently well equipped to do the surveillance mission that it has been tasked to do. To cut down cost, the various elements in the Force will station in their present home bases to be looked after by the host nation.

Bearing in mind the policy of non-interference, detachments will carry out overlapping patrols by air and report any would-be offender to the nearest available ship or boat for a pursuit. High sea criminals, when apprehended, will be

returned to the country where they were first sighted, even if they succeed in crossing to another neighboring country.

RECOMMENDATION

From the foregoing, it is obvious that a sufficient case has been made for the need to establish a force that should look after the collective defense of West Africa. Conscious of the enormous amount of money that is sunk into defense annually, I here now recommend as a modest beginning-- a precursor to the ECOWAS Force; the establishment of an Air and Maritime Task Force. Barring a few problems, the Force should really take off as soon as possible.

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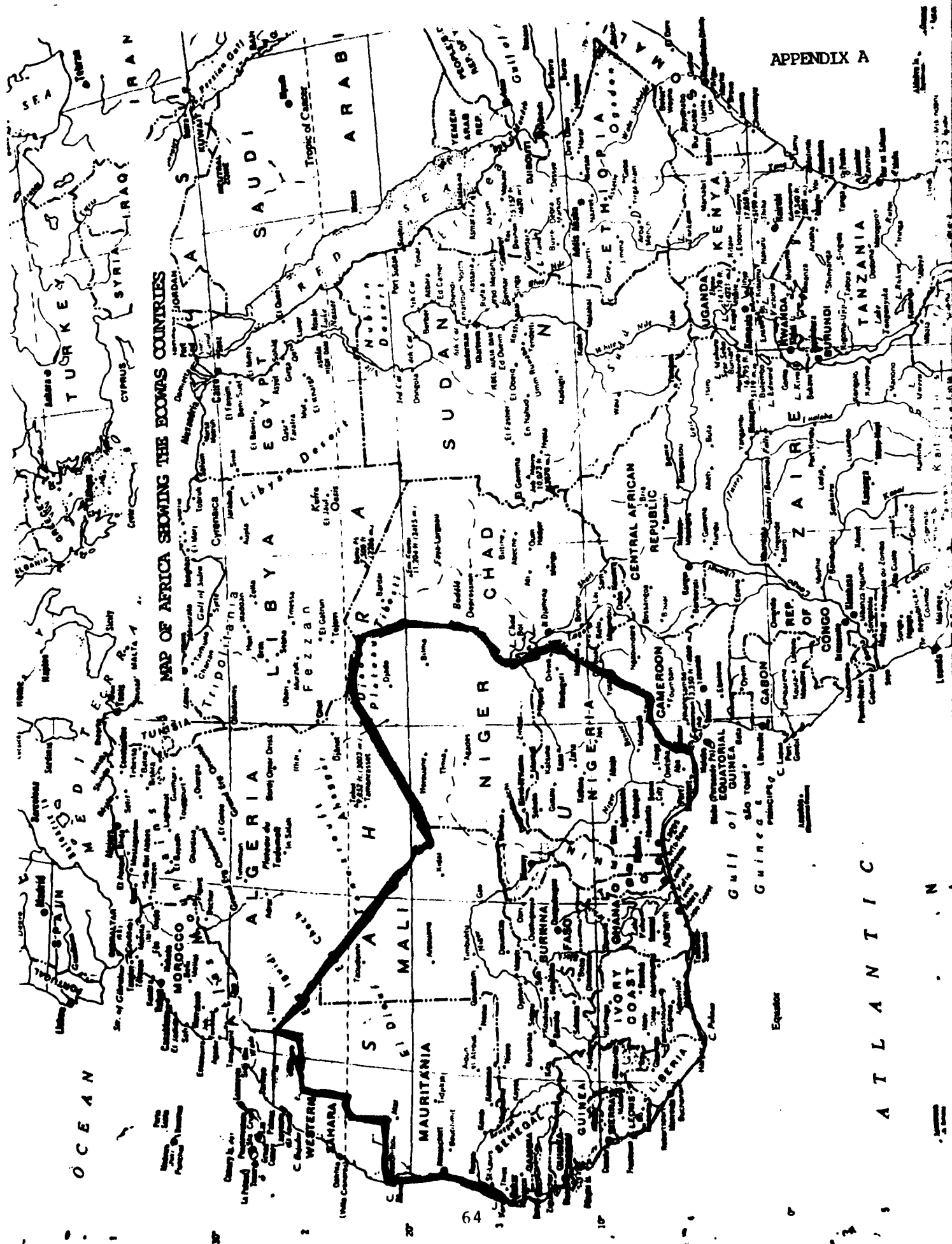
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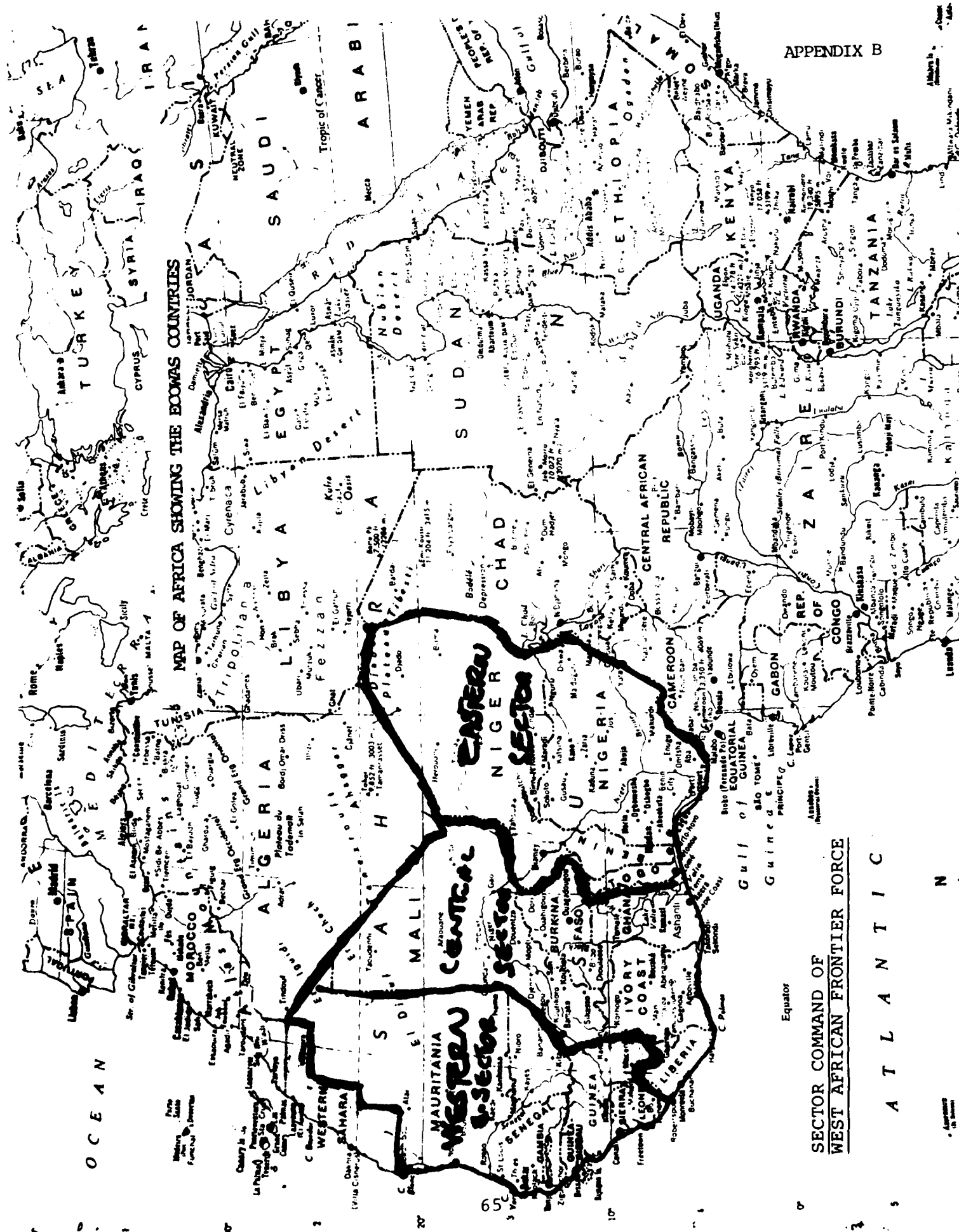
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MAP OF AFRICA SHOWING THE ECOWAS COUNTRIES



MAP OF AFRICA SHOWING THE EOWAS COUNTRIES



SECTOR COMMAND OF
WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE

A T L A N T I C

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- - Control Towers
- ✈ - Aircraft patrol Route - Mul Surveillance AGs - EEEZ
- ⚓ - Military Patrol Ships/Boats - ECoast Guard countries

APPENDIX D

ARMED FORCES OF VARIOUS ECOWAS NATIONS

BENIN

TOTAL ARMED FORCES: (all services

form part of the Army):

ACTIVE: 4,350.

Terms of service: conscription (selective), 18 months.

ARMY: 3,800.

3 inf bn.

1 AB/cdo bn.

1 engr bn.

1 armd sqn.

1 arty bty.

EQUIPMENT:

LIGHT TANKS: 20 PT-76.

RECCE: 9 M-8, 14 BRDM-2.

TOWED ARTY: 105mm: 4 M-101.

NAVY: 200.

BASE: Cotonou.

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 7:

TORPEDO CRAFT: 2 Sov P-4 (with 2 x 533mm TT.

PATROL, INSHORE: 1 Patriote, PFI (Fr 38m), 4).

Note: All except Patriote, which is new, probably non-operational.

AIR FORCE: 350; no cdt ac or armed hel.

AIRCRAFT: 3 C-47, 2 An-26, 1 F-27 Mk 600, 1

Falcon 20, 1 Aero Commander 500B, 1 Corvette

200 (VIP), 2 MH-15: 11 pt; 1 Reims Cessna 337 II.

HELICOPTERS: 1 SA-3 5B, 2 AS-350B, 1 Bell 47G.

PARA-MILITARY:

GENDARMERIE: 2,000; 4 mobile coy.

PUBLIC SECURITY FORCE.

PEOPLE'S MILITIA 1,500-2,000.

GHANA

TOTAL ARMED FORCES:

ACTIVE: 10,600.

Terms of service: voluntary.

ARMY: 9,000.

2 Command HQ:

2 bde (comprising 6 inf bn and spt units).

1 recce bn.

1 AB bn.

1 mor regt (bn).

1 fd engr regt (bn).

EQUIPMENT:

RECCE: 25 Saladin, 3 EE-9 Cascavel.

APC: 50 MOWAG Piranha.

MORTARS: 120mm: 28 Tampella.

RCL: 84mm: 50 Carl Gustav.

AD: SAM: SA-7.

NAVY: 800.

2 Commands, Western and Eastern.

BASES: Sekondi, (HQ. West) Tema (HQ. East).

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 8:

COASTAL: 4:

2 Kromantse PCC (ASW) with 1 x 3 Squid ASW
mor. 1 x 102mm gun.

2 Ichimota (FRG Lürssen 58m) PFC.

INSHORE: 4

2 Dzala (FRG Lürssen 45m) PCI.

2 Dela PFI.

(Note: Spares in short supply, some vessels may be unserviceable.)

AIR FORCE: 800.

9 cdt ac, no armed hel.

COIN: 1 sqn with 9 MB-326 (4 -K, 5 -F COIN/trg).

TRANSPORT: 2 sqn:

1 with 3 Fokker (2 F-27, 1 F-28);

1 with 3 F-27.

HELICOPTERS: 4 Alouette III, 2 Bell 212.

TRAINING: 1 sqn with 8 BN-2, 10 Bulldog 122.

FORCES ABROAD:

LEBANON (UNIFIL): 1 bn (690).

PARA-MILITARY:

PEOPLE'S MILITIA: 5,000.

NATIONAL CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE. Committees
for the Defence of the Revolution

GUINEA-BISSAU

TOTAL ARMED FORCES: (all services incl

Gendarmerie are part of the Army):

ACTIVE: 9,200.

Terms of service: conscription (selective).

ARMY: 6,800.

1 armd bn (sqn).

5 inf bn.

1 recce sqn.

1 engr coy.

1 arty bn.

EQUIPMENT:

MBT: 10 T-34.

LIGHT TANKS: 20 PT-76.

RECCE: 10 BRDM-2.

APC: 35 BTR-40/60/152, 20 Ch Type-56.

TOWED ARTY: 27: 85mm: 8 D-44; 122mm: 18
M-1938/D-30.

MORTARS: 120mm: 8 M-1943.

RL: 89mm.

RCL: 75mm: Ch Type-52; 82mm: B-10.

AD GUNS: 23mm: 18 ZU-23; 37mm: 6 M-1939;

57mm: 10 S-60.

SAM: SA-7.

NAVY: 300.

BASE: Bissau.

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 14:

PATROL INSHORE: 14:

1 Sov Shershen (no TT), 2 Ch Shantou PFI.

11 PCI.

AMPHIBIOUS: Craft only; 2 Sov T4 LCVP.

AIR FORCE: 100.

no cbt ac or armed hel.

TRANSPORT: 2 Do-27, 2 Yak-40; ✕

MR: 1 Reims Cessna FTB-337.

HELICOPTERS: 1 Alouette II, 2 Alouette III, 1 Mi-8.

PARA-MILITARY:

GENDARMERIE: 2,000.

IVORY COAST

TOTAL ARMED FORCES:

ACTIVE: 7,100.

*Terms of service: conscription (selective),
6 months.*

RESERVES: 12,000.

ARMY: 5,500.

4 Military Regions:

1 armd bn.

3 inf bn.

1 arty gp.

1 AA arty bty.

1 engr coy.

1 AB coy.

EQUIPMENT:

LIGHT TANKS: 5 AMX-13.

RECCE: 7 ERC-90, e 16 AML-60/90.

APC: 16 M-3, 13 VAB.

TOWED ARTY: 105mm: 4 M-1950.

MORTARS: 120mm: 16 AM-50.

RL: STRIM.

RCL: 106mm M-40.

AD GUNS: 20mm: 16 incl 6 M-3 VDA SP; 40mm:
5 L60/-70.

NAVY: 700.

BASE: Lecodjo (Abidjan).

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 10:

MISSILE CRAFT: 4:

2 *Le Vigilant* (Fr SFCN 47-m) with 4 x MM-40
Exocet SSM.

2 *L'Ardent* (Fr Auroux 37-m) with 4 x SS-12 SSM.

PATROL: 6 PCI.

AMPHIBIOUS: 1 *L'Eléphant* (Fr BATR-1L) LSM,
capacity 180 tps, 8 veh.

AIR FORCE: 900;

6 cbt ac, no armed hel.

FOA: 1 sqn with 6 *AlphaJet*.

TRANSPORT: 1 hel sqn with 3 SA-330, 1 *Alouette* III,
4 SA-365C.

LIAISON/VIP: Presidential flt with:

AIRCRAFT: 1 F-28, 2 *Gulfstream*; (1 -II, 1 -III)

HELICOPTERS: 1 SA-330.

TRAINING: 6 *Bonanza* F-33C, 2 Reims Cessna 150.

LIAISON: 2 Reims Cessna F-337, 1 Cessna 421, 1
Super King Air 200.

PARA-MILITARY: 7,800:

PRESIDENTIAL GUARD: 1,100.

GENDARMERIE: 4,400; VAB APC, 4 patrol boats.

MILITIA: 1,500.

MILITARY FIRE SERVICE: 800.

LIBERIA

TOTAL ARMED FORCES:

ACTIVE: 5,800.

Terms of service: voluntary.

RESERVES: c 50,000 males 16-45.

ARMY: 5,300.

1 Executive Mansion Guard bn.

6 inf bn.

1 arty bn.

1 engr bn.

1 armd recce sqn.

1 air recce bn.

EQUIPMENT:

APC: 10 MOWAG.

TOWED ARTY: 11: 75mm 3 pack; 105mm: 8.

MRL: BM-21.

MORTARS: 4.2-in. (107mm).

RL: 3.5-in. (89mm).

RCL: 57mm, 106mm.

AVIATION: MR: 1 Cessna 337.

TRANSPORT: 2 C-47, 4 Arava. X

LIAISON: 9 Cessna (1 208, 2 172, 2 185, 4 337).

NAVY: (Coast Guard): 500.

BASES: Monrovia, Bassa, Sinoe, Cape Palmas.

PATROL CRAFT: 5 PC1.

PARA-MILITARY:

NATIONAL POLICE: 2,000.

NIGERIA

TOTAL ARMED FORCES:

ACTIVE: 94,500.

Terms of service: voluntary.

RESERVES: planned; none organized.

ARMY: 80,000.

1 armd div (4 armd, 1 mech bde).

1 composite div (incl 1 AB, 1 air portable,

1 amph bde).

2 mech div (each 3 mech bde).

Div tps: each div 1 arty, 1 engr bde, 1 recce bn.

EQUIPMENT:

MBT: 132: 60 T-55, 72 Vickers Mk 3.

LIGHT TANKS: 100 Scorpion.

RECCE: 165: 20 Saladin, c 120 AML-60, 60 AML-90, 55 Fox.

APC: 10 Saracen, 300 Steyr 4K-7FA.

TOWED ARTY: 497: 105mm: 200 M-56; 122mm: 200

D-30/74, 155mm: 25 FH-77B.

SP ARTY: 155mm: 25 Palmaria.

RCL: 84mm: Carl Gustav, 106mm: M-40.

AD GUNS: some 90: 20mm: some 60, 23mm: 30

ZSU-23-4 SP, 40mm: L60/70.

SAM: 48 Blowpipe, 16 Roland.

NIGERIA (CONTINUED)

NAVY: 5,000.

BASES: Apapa (Lagos; HQ Western Command),

Calabar (HQ Eastern Command).

FRIGATES: 2:

1 Aradu (FRG Meko-360) with 1 Lynx hel, 2 x 3

ASTT; plus 8 x Otomat SSM, 1 127mm gun.

1 Obuma (trg) with hel deck; plus 1 2 102mm guns.

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 51:

CORVETTES: 3:

2 Erinomi (UK Vosper Mk 9) with 1 x 2 ASW mor.

1 Oloho (UK Vosper Mk 3) (in refit).

MISSILE CRAFT: 6:

3 Ekpe (FRG Lürssen-57) PFM with 4 x Otomat SSM.

3 Siri (Fr Combattante) with 2 x 2 MM-38

Exocet SSM.

PATROL INSHORE: 42:

4 Makurdi (UK Brooke Marine 33m), some 38 PC1.

MINE WARFARE: 2 Ohue (mod 11 Lerici) MCC.

AMPHIBIOUS: 2 Ambe (FRG) LST, capacity 200 tps, 5 tk.

SUPPORT AND MISCELLANEOUS: 1 survey.

NAVAL AVIATION:

HELICOPTERS: 3 Westland Lynx Mk 89 MR/SAR.

AIR FORCE: 9,500:

84 cbt ac (plus 12 being mod), no armed hel.

FBA/FIGHTER: 3 sqn:

1 with 22 AlphaJet (FGA/trg);

1 with 12 MiG-21 bis, 6 MiG-21U

(12 MiG-21MF being refurbished);

1 with 18 Jaguar (14 -SN, 4 -BN trg).

COM: 24 L-39 (COIN/trg).

SAR: 1 sqn with:

AIRCRAFT: 2 F-27MR;

HELICOPTERS: 20 Bo-105C/D.

TRANSPORT: 2 sqn with 9 C-130 (6 -H, 3 -H-30), 3

F-27, 5 G-222, 6 Do-228 (VIP), 1 Gulfstream II

(VIP), 1 Boeing 727-200 (VIP).

LIGHT TPT: 3 sqn with 18 Do-28D, 18 Do-128-6.

HELICOPTERS: incl 14 SA-330, 24 Bo-105 (4 -C, 20 -D).

TRAINING:

AIRCRAFT: 2 MiG-21U, 12 MB-339, P-149D, 25

Bulldog.

HELICOPTERS: 14 Hughes 300.

AAM: AA-2 Atoll.

PARA-MILITARY:

COASTGUARD: 15 Abeokuta, 3 other patrol craft.

PORT SECURITY POLICE: 12,000.

SECURITY AND CIVIL DEFENCE CORPS (Ministry of Internal Affairs): Police: UR- 416 APC, 4 hel, 68 small craft, 7 hovercraft (5 AV Tiger).

SENEGAMBIA

In December 1983 a confederal budget was introduced. In 1987/8 it was fr CFA 3.03 bn. The Federal Armed Forces consist of 1 inf bn located in Gambia. One coy is manned by Gambian troops. the remainder by Senegal.

TOGO

TOTAL ARMED FORCES: (all services, incl Gendarmerie, form part of the Army):
ACTIVE: 5,900.

Terms of service: conscription, 2 years (selective).

ARMY: 4,000.

2 inf regt:

1 with 1 mech bn, 1 mot bn;

1 with 2 armd sqn, 3 inf coy; spt units (trg).

1 Presidential Guard regt: 2 bn (1 cdo), 2 coy.

1 para cdo regt: 3 coy.

1 spt regt: 1 fd arty bty; 2 AA arty bty; 1

log/tpl/engr bn.

EQUIPMENT:

MBT: 2 T-54/55.

LIGHT TANKS: 9 *Scorpion*.

RECCE: 6 M-8, 3 M-20, 3 AML-60, 7 -90, 36 EE-9
Cascavel.

APC: 4 M-3A1, 30 UR-416.

TOWED ARTY: 105mm: 4 HIM-2.

RCL: 57mm: 5 ZIS-2; 75mm: 12 Ch Type-52/-56;
85mm: 10 Ch Type-65.

AD GUNS: 14.5mm: 38 ZPU-4; 37mm: 5 M-39.

NAVY: 100.

BASE: Lomé.

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS: 2

MISSILE CRAFT: 2 *Mono PFM* (with SS-12 SSM).

AIR FORCE: 250:

13 cbt ac, no armed hel.

COM: 6 EMB-326GC, 4 *AlphaJet*.

COIN/TRG: 3 TB-30.

TRANSPORT: 1 F-28-1000 (VIP), 2 DHC-5D, 1 X

Do-27, 2 Reims Cessna 337, 2 *Baron*.

HELICOPTERS: 1 SA-330, 2 SA-315.

PARA-MILITARY:

GENDARMERIE: 750; 1 trg school, 2 regional
sections, 1 mobile sqn.

PRESIDENTIAL HONOUR GUARD: 800.