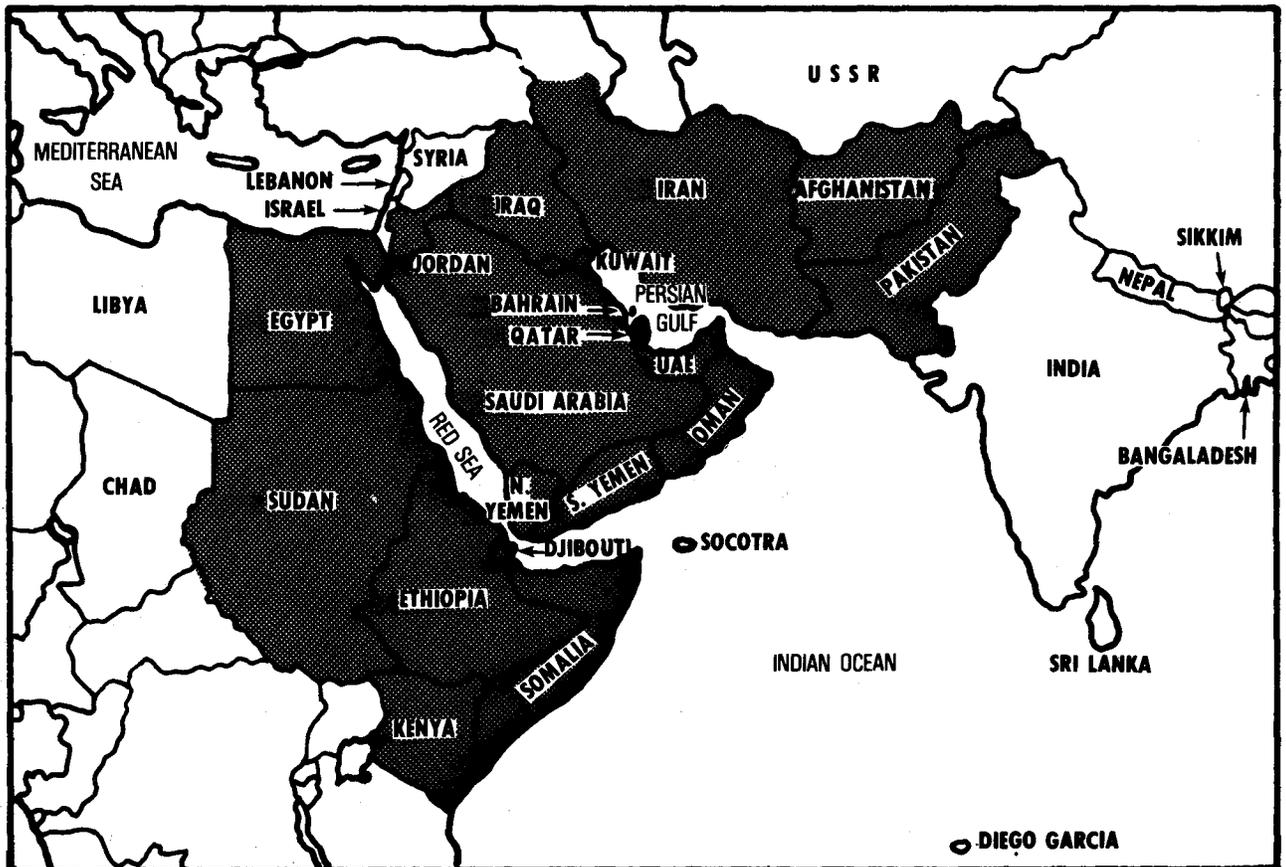


# COVER FEATURE

## THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND

### INTRODUCTION

The United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) is one of the newest commands in the military, yet the command's area of responsibility is among the world's oldest known civilized regions. It is a region rich in cultural, ethnic, and religious heritage. The area has been a focal point of knowledge and power, and a strategic passage for commerce and warriors alike. USCENTCOM's area of responsibility (AOR) includes 19 countries; bordered on the East by Pakistan, it includes Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Jordan on the Asian continent, the entire Arabian Peninsula, and Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya on the African continent. It also includes the waters of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, the states in South-west Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and the Horn of Africa.



## HISTORICAL CONSIDERATIONS

To understand the importance of this region and its effect on the world balance of power, one need only examine events dating back to World War II. Immediately following that war, the U.S. found itself engaged in rebuilding a war devastated Western Europe and Japan, with Great Britain and France providing aid to the countries of Africa and the Middle East. Great Britain and France were capably representing Western interests in what is now the USCENTCOM AOR, and British forces were in the region. The early 1950's marked the beginning of U.S. support for Saudi Arabia, and also saw the beginning of the realization that Africa and the Middle East were important to the United States. However, it was not until Great Britain's economy dictated a reduction in the size and scope of the British military that the U.S. felt the need to fill a vacuum left by the decreasing influence of the British Empire in the face of the increasing power of the Soviet Union.

The Soviets also recognized the importance of this area, making it a focal point of their expansion efforts more than four decades ago. In the early 1940's, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov declared the area in the direction of the Persian Gulf to be ". . . the center of the aspirations of the Soviet Union."

British presence and influence declined in the areas East of Suez in the aftermath of World War II. This, coupled with the need to contain communism, led to the birth of a U.S. security assistance program in the region. Large inventories of excess World War II military equipment and material were available for assistance programs. With the Soviets focusing on the area, and with such equipment available in the U.S., Congress and the American public became very supportive of U.S. assistance to nations in the region.

Two events combined to erode this support--the Vietnam conflict and the near depletion of our surplus war equipment. The change that Vietnam had on the mood of Americans and the resulting reevaluation of the U.S. role in the world is well documented. This change of mood and the surplus draw-down led to a reduction in U.S. assistance programs at a time when Moscow's programs were expanding. The Soviet threat focused largely on the developing countries of the world, to include those in Southwest Asia. The Soviets used military advisors and arms sales to gain footholds in Third World countries.

The withdrawal of British forces from East of Suez accelerated in the late 1960's and early 1970's. This ultimately brought U.S. attention back to the area. In an attempt to maintain stability, U.S. assistance efforts began to increase, particularly in Iran.

In 1979, two new events upset the stability of the region and altered the balance of power: the Iranian revolution and the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. As the decade of the 1980's opened, it was clear that the revolution had eliminated Iran as a stabilizing influence. It was also clear that there was no counter-balancing military force in the area to assist in maintaining stability and safeguarding free world interests. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan gave tangible evidence that the Soviet Union would not hesitate to use military force to further longstanding Soviet ambitions, where no serious opposition existed.



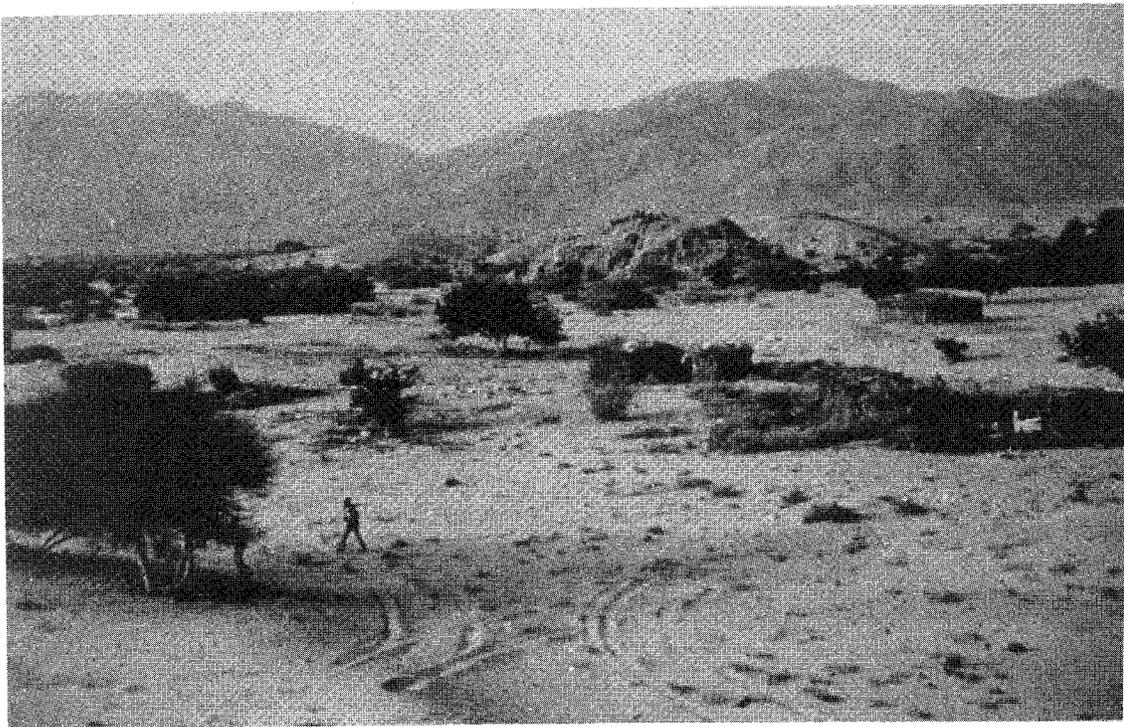
Cairo, a modern city . . . .



contrasts with an ancient form of shelter.



Freezing cold . . . ,



contrasts with burning sands.

## THE USCENTCOM REGION TODAY

With that historical backdrop, let us take a look at the USCENTCOM area of today. There is a tendency to focus on oil when one thinks of the Middle East, but there is much more to this region. Lush rain forests and fertile agricultural areas in areas of Sudan and Kenya contrast with barren deserts in parts of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The climate varies as much as the terrain; snow and freezing temperatures chill one part, while the sun bakes the desert in another. Miles of paved freeways in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait sharply contrast with foot trails, still widely used as avenues of transportation elsewhere in the region. High technology aircraft and computers exist side by side with an ancient form of transportation--the camel. Modern cities such as Jeddah contrast sharply with towns and villages of mud huts or tents. It is easy to find lands of plenty and lands of starvation. The annual per capita income in the oil rich countries reaches 17,000 U.S. dollars, while it is barely 100 U.S. dollars among the region's poorer countries.

The politics of the region are as diverse as the economies, varying from the democracy of Kenya to the Soviet-supported socialist government of the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen. One can find modern industry in Pakistan, Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, while economies based on primitive agriculture prevail in other nations.

The geographical, political, and sociological diversity that make up this region does not take away from its strategic and economic importance to the world. The formation of USCENTCOM as a theater command provides recognition that America needs close ties with nations in the region, and the U.S. is vitally interested in preserving their autonomy. The U.S. wants to strengthen those ties, and USCENTCOM was established to help do that. Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger has stated: "Its [USCENTCOM's] establishment highlights the importance we place on being able to deter or oppose Soviet aggression in the region."

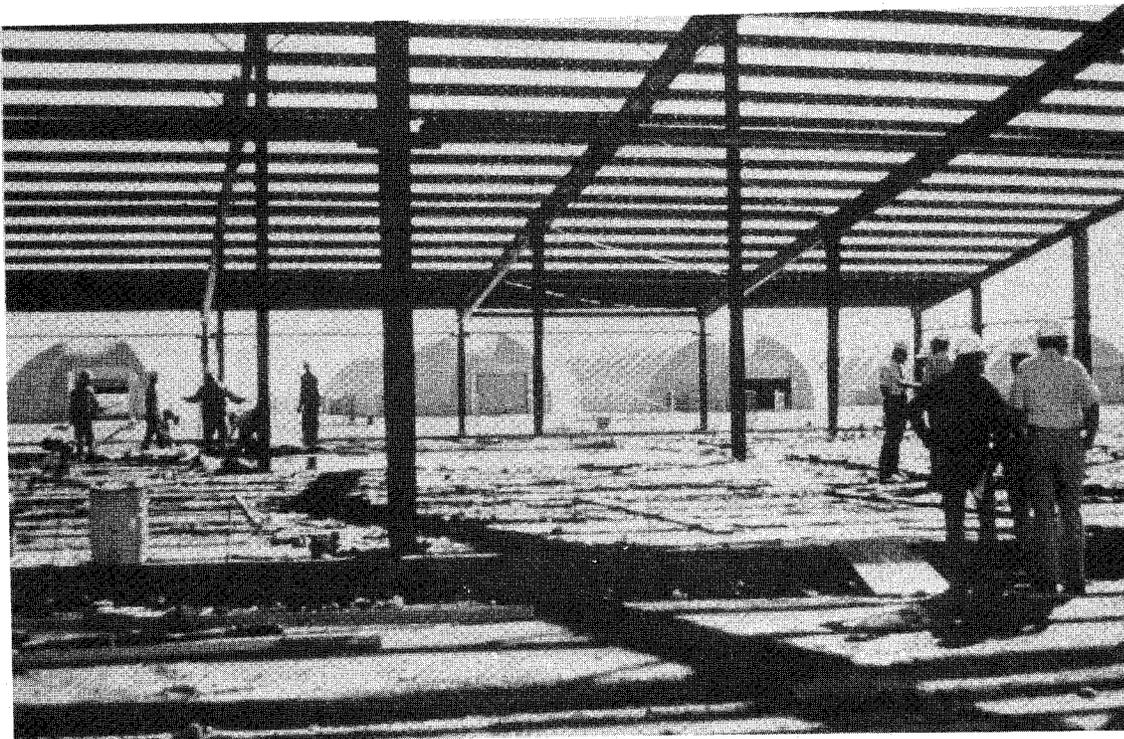
USCENTCOM works closely with many nations of the area, helping them to improve their defensive capabilities, thus promoting regional stability. Until they achieve self sufficiency, the U.S. must continue to assist these nations in meeting their security needs by supporting their individual and collective efforts. The formation of USCENTCOM is a clear signal of America's long-term resolve to promote stability and peace in the region. Implicit in this is the recognition that the issues are complex and that the long-term key to improved security rests chiefly with the nations of the area.

## THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE MISSION

USCENTCOM's security assistance programs are vital, and our Security Assistance Organizations (SAOs) play a critical role. Through SAOs, the U.S. delivers to AOR countries the systems and training required to improve their own defenses. To that end, of the nineteen AOR countries, ongoing security assistance programs exist in fourteen [i.e., Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, North Yemen, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates], and U.S. FMS financing is available to nine. USCENTCOM SAOs, as members of country teams, are also vital links in the USCENTCOM net to insure the implementation and success of U.S. efforts to preserve the balance of power and the independence of the nations in the region.



SAO personnel work with local military officials.



Military construction in the USCENTCOM region.

The SAOs in the AOR face some unique challenges. One of their first and biggest hurdles is the business of self-support. Although part of USCENTCOM, SAOs are geographically separated from the headquarters by 7,000 or more air miles. Several SAOs have no AUTOVON telephone lines, and commercial telephone communications with the headquarters is difficult at best. Many SAOs live and work in austere environments where the need to provide basic essentials takes a high priority. A major goal of USCENTCOM is to make sure all SAOs have the means to assure personal security and improve their quality of life. Anything that can be done to enhance their living conditions brings them a bit closer to a normal U.S. life style and reduces the time they must spend on personal and family needs. Efforts have been repaid many times over as SAOs are able to devote more of their energies to the mission as the provision of basic needs requires less effort.

Notwithstanding the importance of support needs, SAOs must turn their attention to the business at hand--program management and the administration of security assistance. There are many factors which, in total, make USCENTCOM SAOs' jobs different from SAOs in other commands. As mentioned previously, the enormous distance and time differences between the headquarters at MacDill AFB, Florida, and the SAOs has a significant impact on program management. Flight time from the headquarters to the center of the region is some 15 non-stop, air-refueled hours in a C-5 aircraft. The sea lines of communication stretch some 8,000 miles from the U.S. via the Suez Canal and over 12,000 miles should shipments have to go by way of the Cape of Good Hope.

Two other unusual challenges U.S. Central Command SAOs encounter are: (1) interfacing with regional military counterparts in the absence of a historical background of U.S. and host nations having previously fought or worked side by side; and (2) the absence of formal country-to-country treaties or alliances. The post-World War II period brought about many formal agreements between the U.S. and countries throughout the world, but not in the USCENTCOM region. There are, therefore, few historical and formal foundations for SAOs to build upon. As a result, USCENTCOM's SAOs must build their own bridges--often informal, and person to person.

Another factor that distinguishes the tasks of USCENTCOM SAOs is that they accomplish their mission in an area with three ongoing conflicts: (1) Iraq versus Iran; (2) Somalia versus Ethiopia; and, (3) the USSR invasion of Afghanistan. The potential for these conflicts to expand and encompass other nations in this region is always present. For instance, expansion of the Iraq-Iran war might jeopardize continued access to Persian Gulf oil by all nations, or endanger the security of other Gulf states. These factors place extra demands on our people, as some nations feel a need for increased assistance to protect themselves against the spread of hostilities. The SAO is often the first one the local military turns to for help as the main link to the U.S. government.

A final unique aspect of USCENTCOM is the lack of component forces in the AOR. Although almost 300,000 personnel from all four services are on a force list for planning, large U.S. forces are not stationed in the AOR. As a consequence, USCENTCOM must rely more upon United States Defense Representatives (USDR) and SAOs than do unified commands with components established in their AOR. SAO chiefs, as USCENTCOM's direct military

representatives, support the diverse requirements of this command in both security assistance and operational functions. SAO chiefs have been designated USDRs in ten of the fourteen countries where security assistance programs exist. The Commander of the Mideast Force (COMIDEASTFOR) is the USDR for Bahrain, Qatar, and Djibouti. In Oman, the Defense Attache doubles as the USDR. This dual-hatting requires USCENTCOM's SAOs to manage resources and workloads very carefully. In USCENTCOM, the USDR requirements have been handled professionally without degradation of the SAO functions. Additionally, by melding the two functions--SAO/USDR--the host nation's defense requirements can be better identified and integrated, as appropriate, into the regional rationalization, standardization, and interoperability efforts.

As the senior military representative of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command (USCINCCENT), the security assistance chief finds himself performing a multitude of tasks. On any given day he might negotiate country-to-country arrangements, be involved in military coordination, plan a ship visit, help host nations with their portions of combined exercises, arrange overflight rights, and attend to the interests of all U.S. Department of Defense personnel in country. When designated as the direct representative of the CINC, he is also responsible for fostering and maintaining those unique "handshake" agreements that permit the U.S. Central Command to accomplish its mission.

Although USCENTCOM is just over two years old, there have been significant achievements; and with assistance from Washington agencies, more results are beginning to emerge from the emphasis on quality of life improvements. Funded environmental and morale leave has moved from concept to program; housing and associated support have been improved; recreational facilities and equipment are being made available; duty and emergency communications systems have been improved; CHAMPUS filing procedures have been streamlined for security assistance personnel; MAC flights to Somalia now exist; and two C-12 aircraft have been secured for use in Somalia and Pakistan. Progress is also being made toward integrating host nation and regional requirements with USCENTCOM regional planning considerations. Several nations of the region are making efforts to integrate their defense systems and are making gains toward standardizing equipment for increased interoperability.

In spite of these accomplishments, many goals remain. High on the list is the need to help maintain the security and stability of the region. USCENTCOM will continue to promote mutually beneficial relations with regional allies. As security assistance and military sales programs develop new military capabilities for nations of the region, USCENTCOM will be in a position to recommend appropriate adjustments to overall U.S. assistance. The SAOs are part of the leading edge of a team effort that will help assure the continuance of regional order and further develop mutually beneficial military ties with countries of the region.

## USCENTCOM AOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LEVELS

Source: FY86 Congressional Presentation Document  
[\$ in Thousands]\*

<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>FY84 (Actual)</u>	<u>FY85 (Estimated)</u>	<u>FY86 (Proposed)</u>
FMS Financing	1,830,000 (32.0)	1,630,000 (33.0)	1,778,300 (31.5)
MAP	91,400 (13.1)	105,500 (12.7)	132,500 (13.9)
IMET	9,572 (18.7)	10,500 (18.7)	12,075 (18.4)
Overseas Military Program Management	12,993 (20.8)	16,072 (21.7)	17,523 (22.5)
ESF	1,189,000 (36.6)	1,232,500 (32.1)	1,295,000 (45.9)
Commercial Sales	298,352 (17.8)	250,030 ( 8.3)	278,612 ( 7.8)
Foreign Military and Construction Sales Agreements**	4,603,696 (31.6)	5,800,000 (36.3)	5,597,000 (43.1)

\* Figures in parentheses are percent of worldwide dollars going to USCENTCOM AOR.

\*\* Sales agreements are used as a measure of activity. These may reflect cash and/or FMS financing and/or MAP funding.