

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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TOP SECRET-SENSITIVE
CONTAINS CODEWORD

March 18, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI

SUBJECT:

DOS & NSC review(s) completed.

Daily Report

OSD review completed

Information

Cossiga Government to Fall This Week: Dick Gardner reports that with the political truce now definitely ended in Italy, the Cossiga government is expected to fall during the course of a parliamentary debate which will open on Wednesday. It is not yet clear whether the government will fall in a vote or merely as the consequence of a formal confirmation during the debate that the PSI and PRI have withdrawn their essential "abstention" support. Dick comments that it is probable another transitional or "technical" government will be formed to get Italy through the regional elections and June summit appointments. Cossiga remains a likely candidate to head such a government, which might be a one-party DC minority government, a formula that many observers consider the most "neutral" and politically "colorless" in the circumstances. (C)

Capability of Somalia's Armed Forces: After completing its study of Somalia's armed forces, the U.S. Defense Requirements Survey Team concluded that Mogadishu's armed forces are in much worse shape than generally believed and have only a very limited defensive capability. The team's report notes that:

- the air force, with only nine operational fighters, is ineffective;
- the capabilities of the air defense units and ten ship navy are marginal at best;
- only some 50-60 percent of the army's limited inventory of tanks and artillery pieces are operational; and
- maintenance standards throughout the services are inadequate due to aging Soviet equipment and the lack of spare parts. (S)

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REVIEW ON MARCH 17, 2000

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NSC ActivitiesSCC on Timing of UK Strategic Modernization Decision

Yesterday most SCC members agreed with Cy's view that we should give the British a firm date on which we would go forward with the UK decision. To avoid complicating the Belgian TNF decision, this would occur in June. I expressed uneasiness because the British decision and the Soviet reaction to it could create political complications for you this year, and suggested that it would be preferable to delay until 1981. I suggested that you ask Prime Minister **Thatcher** whether in view of these problems she would be willing to wait until 1981 and if not, we would be prepared to go ahead in June. Cy and Harold said that the British could not count on a 1981 commitment and felt that even asking the British to wait would create serious concerns in Britain about our commitment, leading to leaks that would be harmful politically and could endanger SALT. (TS)

Allegations that the WIMEX System is Unreliable

I recently asked the Defense Department to give me more information on the Washington Post story claiming GAO investigators found the WIMEX computer system "prone to break down under pressure." According to Defense, the WIMEX attack warning system is independent of the WIMEX support system which performs functions such as maintaining information on the status of our forces and does break down occasionally. We achieve a very high computer reliability in the WIMEX attack warning system, however, by using the computers in groups to back each other up. While the computers referred to in the Post article are not as reliable as we would like, they pose no danger that we would not receive warning of a missile attack. Even if all the computers in the warning system were to fail, manual backup systems would still provide timely warning of an enemy attack. (U)

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