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ARMS FOR MOROCCO?

U.S. Policy Toward the Conflict in the Western Sahara

DOCUMENTS

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REPORT

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STUDY MISSION TO MOROCCO, THE WESTERN
SAHARA, MAURITANIA, ALGERIA, LIBERIA,
SPAIN, AND FRANCE

AUGUST 5-18, 1979

TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



JANUARY 1980

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

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(II)

FOREWORD

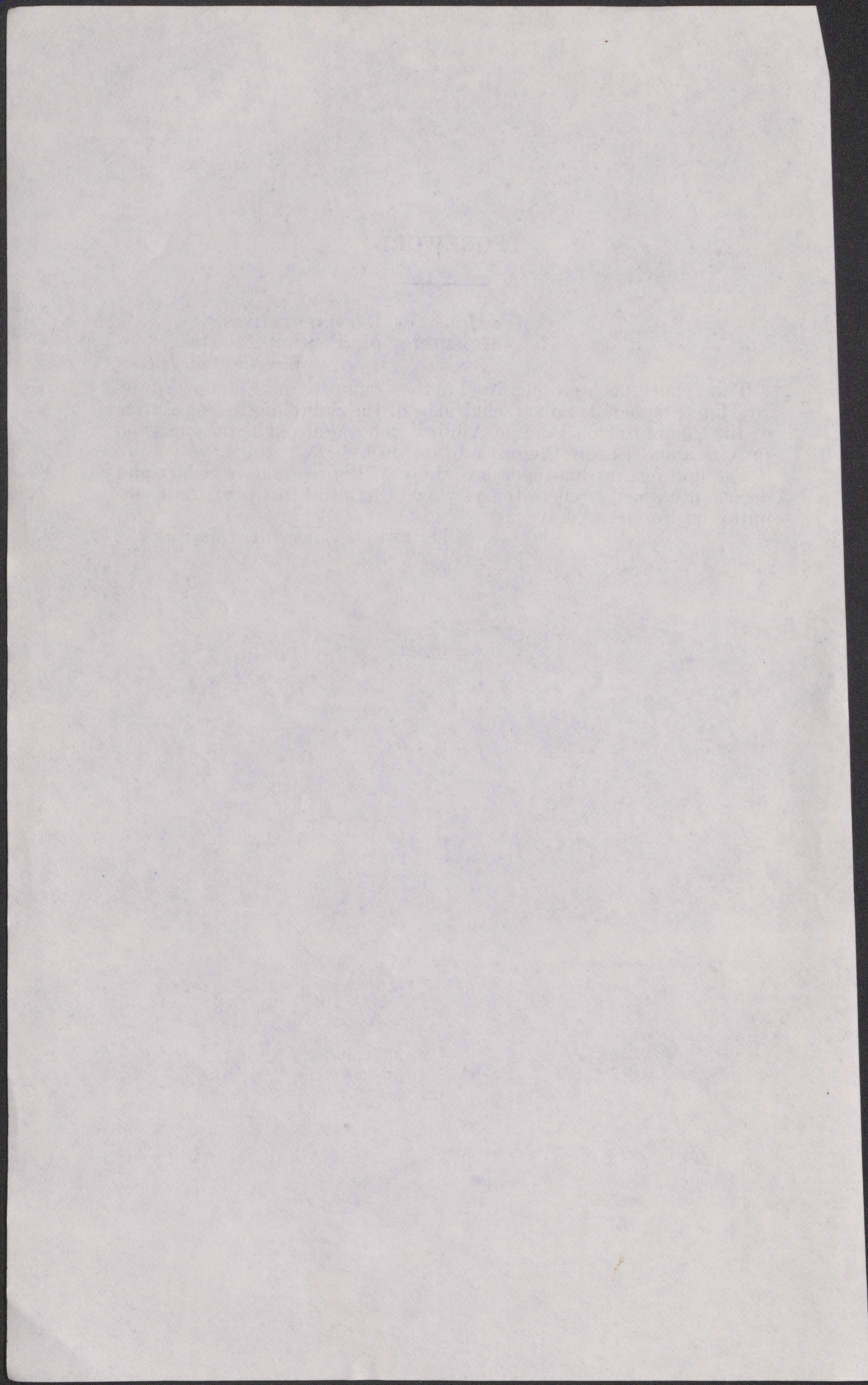
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

This report has been submitted to the Committee on Foreign Affairs by Hon. Stephen J. Solarz, chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who conducted a study mission to Africa and Europe August 5 to 18, 1979.

The findings in this report are those of Representative Solarz and do not necessarily reflect the views of the membership of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

CLEMENT J. ZABLOCKI, *Chairman.*

(III)



LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, D.C.

HON. CLEMENT J. ZABLOCKI,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: In the past several months, the 4-year-old conflict in the Western Sahara between Morocco and the Polisario Front independence movement has intensified greatly, with serious implications for the peace and stability of the region. Following a review of its existing policy of effective neutrality in this dispute, the administration recently decided to tilt in favor of Morocco by selling it counterinsurgency equipment which is suitable for use in the Western Sahara. In the coming months, Congress will have an opportunity to review both the proposed military sales and our overall policy toward the conflict in light of its responsibilities under the Arms Export Control and Foreign Assistance Acts.

Because of the importance of this issue to the Congress and the potential impact it has on U.S. relations with Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, I felt that it would be extremely useful to visit the Maghreb, in my capacity as chairman of the Subcommittee on Africa, in order to get a sense of how the United States should proceed in the coming weeks and months. In addition, I thought it important to consult, insofar as it was feasible, with officials in other countries with interests in the region.

From August 5 to 18, 1979, I traveled to Morocco, the Western Sahara, Mauritania, Algeria, Liberia, Spain, and France. It was in many respects an arduous journey. August is an extraordinarily hot month in the Maghreb, and in some parts of the desert I experienced parching 120° temperatures and violent sandstorms which not only made it difficult to speak but also to see.

In each country I visited, I made an effort to speak to as many individuals and groups involved in the Western Sahara issue as possible. Thus, in Morocco I met with King Hassan II, Prime Minister Maati Bouabid, Foreign Minister Mohamed Boucetta, Intelligence Director Col. Ahmed Dlimi, legislators from all major political parties, businessmen, and union leaders. In the Western Sahara, I met with military and civilian officials in the Moroccan-held cities of El Aaiun and Dakhla. In Mauritania, I had conversations with Prime Minister Mohamed Ould Haidalla and Foreign Minister Ahmedou Abdallah as well as former officials of the previous government. In Algiers, I met with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, Prime Minister Mohamed Abdelghani, Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry Mis-

soum Sbih, Secretary General of the Presidency Smail Hamdani, and other officials. I also journeyed to the remote Tindouf area in southern Algeria where the Polisario Front maintains a large population of refugees from the Western Sahara and has its political and military headquarters. There I had lengthy discussions with top Polisario leaders including Deputy Secretary General Bachir Mustapha Sayed and Political Bureau members Mahfoud Laaroussi and Mohammed Ould Eli Wali, met a variety of people in the large "Tifariti" refugee camp, interviewed Moroccan prisoners, and observed various types of military equipment said to have been captured from Moroccan forces. Like my trip to the Western Sahara, this visit to the Polisario camps was the first by any U.S. official to the area.

During my stay in Liberia, I discussed the Western Sahara problem with President William Tolbert, who is the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, and Foreign Minister Cecil Dennis. In Spain, the former colonizer of the Western Sahara, I met with Acting Foreign Minister Carlos Robles Piquer as well as leading officials of the African Bureau. And in France, which has significant interests in North Africa, I spoke with Guy Georgy, Director for Africa in the Foreign Ministry. In each country I visited, I also met with officials of the American Embassy and, in many cases, with relevant foreign diplomats.

I was accompanied throughout my trip by Steve Weissman, staff associate of the Subcommittee on Africa, and in Liberia and Spain by Johnnie Carson, staff director of the subcommittee. Both of these extraordinarily able and dedicated gentlemen contributed much to the success of our mission, and I am deeply grateful to them for their untiring efforts in this regard.

The following trip report was recently published in Foreign Affairs (winter 1979/80), copyright 1979 by Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., and is reprinted with permission.

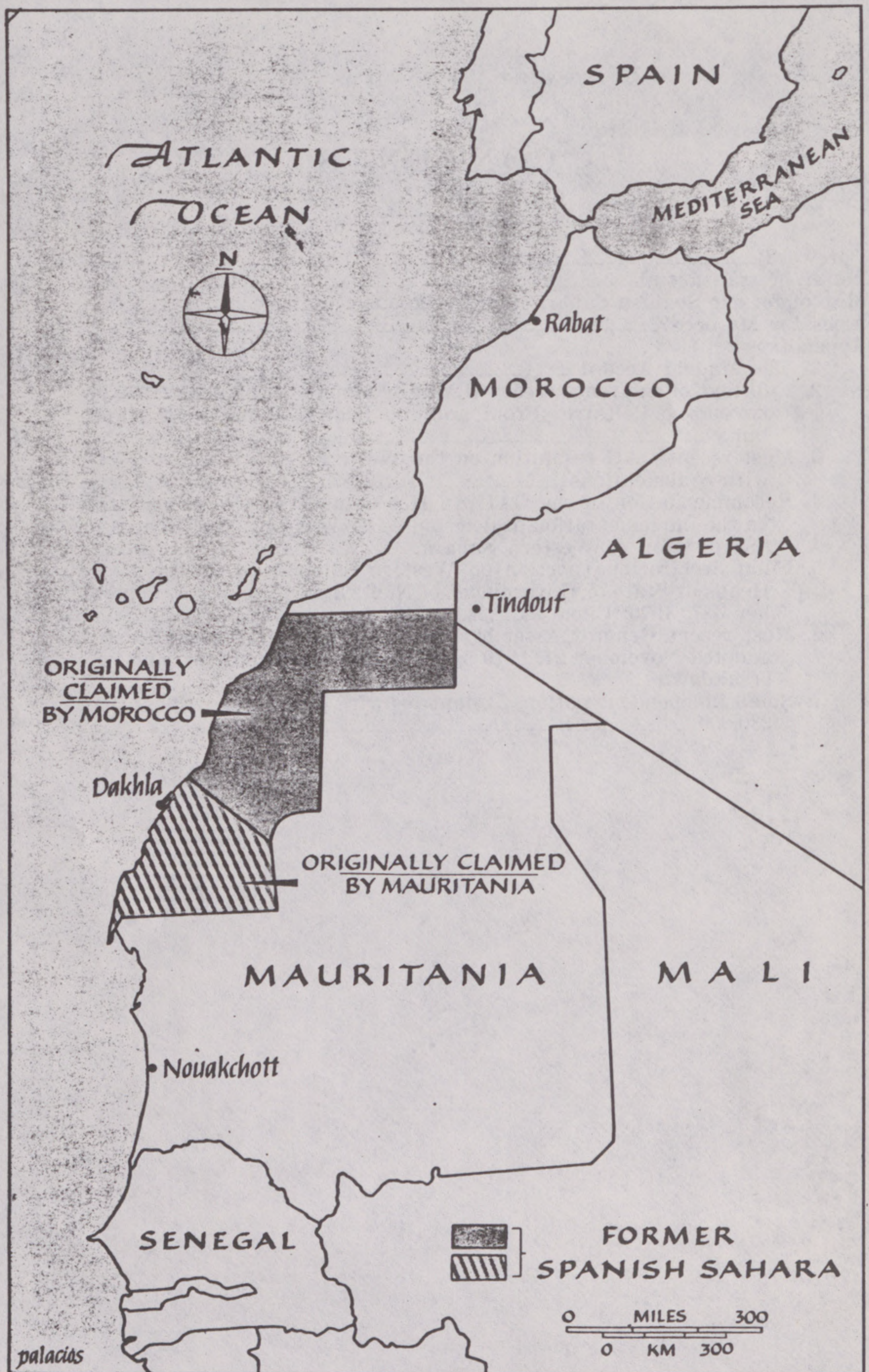
I hope that this report will lead to a better understanding of the Western Sahara dispute and its implications for U.S. diplomacy and, in the process, contribute constructively to congressional consideration and public discussion of U.S. policy in the region.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN J. SOLARZ,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa.

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ARMS FOR MOROCCO?

Most Americans have probably never heard of the Western Sahara. If the name of this Colorado-sized territory in northwest Africa evokes any image at all, it is likely to be one of nomads with their tents and camels against a background of blinding sunlight and endless sand engaged in the ancient and timeless confrontation between man and nature. During a visit to the region last summer, I often wondered at the contemporary international significance of this vast and empty-looking land with its parching 120° days, fierce sandstorms, and blue-robed, nomadic inhabitants.

Yet the Western Sahara is the scene of a major 4-year-old war for national independence waged by Algerian-backed Polisario Front guerrillas against Morocco and, until recently, Mauritania—a struggle which now threatens to escalate into a large-scale regional and even international conflict. In that struggle, an old friend of the United States, the Kingdom of Morocco, seeks American military support for a cause which the overwhelming majority of countries in the world oppose as a contradiction of the very principle of national self-determination. Most important, perhaps, the Moroccan request poses anew the fundamental question raised by our experiences in Angola, Iran, and Nicaragua—whether U.S. policy must always accommodate our friends even when they cling to ill-conceived or untenable positions, or whether our interests are better served by adapting to compelling regional circumstances.

At the moment, the administration's policy toward the Western Sahara appears to be swinging toward a "globalist" approach which emphasizes the implications of the conflict for our reputation as a reliable ally rather than the intrinsic merits of the dispute itself. It has proposed, in spite of the reported opposition of the State Department and skepticism of the Central Intelligence Agency, to abandon its existing policy of selling Morocco arms only for the defense of its own internationally recognized boundaries. Instead, we would be providing King Hassan II with new weapons suitable for counterinsurgency warfare in the disputed area—particularly OV-10 "Bronco" armed reconnaissance aircraft and attack helicopters embellished by TOW antitank missiles. In the coming months, Congress will be reviewing these and any other proposed military sales in the context of both the Arms Export Control Act and the overall foreign assistance program for Morocco. The issues posed by the Saharan war are unlikely to be resolved quickly, and they will undoubtedly provide a major test of our post-Vietnam diplomacy.

Last July, the Subcommittee on Africa of the House Foreign Affairs Committee held hearings on U.S. policy toward the conflict in the Western Sahara. In addition to academic experts on the region, we heard from administration witnesses who presented a series of arms sales options, most of which involved some change in our existing policy of public neutrality on the substance of the dispute in the

Western Sahara. As chairman of the subcommittee, I felt a need to become more familiar with many of the complex and controversial issues raised at our hearings before coming to a judgment on our overall policy. In an effort to get a better sense of the situation in the Sahara, and its implications for American foreign policy in the region, I traveled last August to Morocco. Mauritania, the Western Sahara and Algeria—including the Polisario Front political headquarters and refugee camps at Tindouf—as well as to Spain, France, and Liberia. Fortunately, I was able to meet all of the key leaders in the region, including King Hassan, Algerian President Chadli Benjedid, Mauritanian Prime Minister Ould Haidalla, and Polisario Deputy Secretary-General Bachir Mustapha Sayed, as well as a significant cross-section of relevant government and political elites.

One strong impression that I carried away from my trip was that the military and diplomatic drama now being played out in the Western Sahara is a political version of *Rashomon*. Like the characters in this Japanese film of a rape as seen from the very different perspectives of the rapist, the victim and the victim's husband, the major interested parties disagree profoundly over even the most basic facts of the situation, such as the population of the Western Sahara and the identity of the guerrilla forces. Morocco, for example, contends that there are at most 74,000 people who come from the Western Sahara and that the overwhelming majority of them are still there, living happily under Moroccan rule. The Polisario, on the other hand, argues that there are closer to 750,000 inhabitants of the territory and that they have almost all fled to refugee camps in Algeria and to other neighboring states. Similarly, Morocco claims that the Polisario is a wholly owned and operated subsidiary of the Algerian Government, created several years ago for the sole purpose of advancing Algeria's geopolitical interests in the region. Algeria, which hotly denies this analysis, contends that the Polisario is a genuinely indigenous and independent liberation movement with which it has a real sense of ideological identification but over which it does not exercise any direct control. And while Algeria acknowledges its strong support for the Polisario's effort to establish an independent Saharan state, it argues forcefully that it is not engaged, nor does it have any interest, in destabilizing the Moroccan Government. Indeed, given the extent to which any successor leadership in Rabat is likely to be at least as militantly nationalistic as the current Government, Algerian leaders say they "prefer the devil we know to the devil we don't know."

I found out personally just how difficult it can be to sift fact from fiction amidst the shifting political sands of the Sahara. From 1975 onward, Morocco shared with Mauritania a de facto condominium over the Western Sahara, following the departure of the former colonial power, Spain. In early August 1979, however, the Polisario and Mauritania signed a peace treaty in which Mauritania renounced all territorial claims to its portion of the territory. A week later Morocco augmented troops which were already in this area in accordance with a previous Moroccan-Mauritanian agreement. At that time, I was told by Colonel Dlimi, the head of Morocco's security services, that there had just been spontaneous demonstrations of support for Morocco throughout the Mauritanian section and most notably in the major city

of Dakhla—population 5,000, according to the 1974 Spanish census. The colonel even produced two journalists who had just returned from Dakhla and testified to the existence of the demonstrations and their apparent sincerity. He then asked if I would like to go to Dakhla in order to see the situation for myself. Since the existence of such demonstrations seemed to indicate that the inhabitants of the territory identified with Morocco rather than the Polisario—which, if true, would constitute a fact of enormous political significance—I decided to accept the colonel's invitation.

The next morning I was flown to the city in the King's private airplane. When I arrived, I was greeted by nearly a thousand people, which I was told was the entire population of Dakhla, enthusiastically waving red Moroccan flags and photographs of King Hassan while loudly chanting slogans of allegiance to Morocco. Although Moroccan troops were everywhere in evidence, it did appear as if the demonstrators were genuinely committed to the Moroccan cause. Having suspected that many of the people in Dakhla might be pro-Mauritanian and pro-Polisario, I was a little surprised to see such a unanimous expression of pro-Moroccan feeling. When I subsequently arrived in Mauritania, however, I was informed by high Mauritanian officials that the demonstrators I had observed were largely Moroccans whom the retreating Mauritanian administration had observed arriving in Dakhla by air the previous day. Finally, when I arrived at the Polisario camp in Tindouf, Algeria, I was told by the former mayor of Dakhla and other ex-residents that the true population of prewar Dakhla was in excess of 15,000 but that nearly all the residents had voted with their feet for the Polisario by fleeing the city. All of this was a powerful reminder of the difficulty of establishing an objective basis for a rational analysis of the problem and the consequent desirability of a cautious approach toward policymaking.

II

The Western Sahara lies along the Atlantic coast of northwest Africa opposite the Canary Islands, and is bounded by Morocco to the north, Algeria to the east, and Mauritania to the south and east. Spain commenced its colonization of the territory in 1884 but did not complete its conquest of the interior until 1934. Until little more than a decade ago, the majority of the indigenous population led a nomadic existence arising from the desert's unsuitability for farming and the need to move toward areas where there is sufficient rainfall to support an animal-based economy. Their quest for water often took the several Western Saharan tribes into neighboring countries without regard for colonial or postcolonial frontiers.

The situation changed some with the discovery of the world's fourth largest phosphate deposit at Bu Craa in 1963. Subsequently, as a result of the combined impacts of Spanish efforts to develop the local economy and the Sahelian drought of 1968–73, most of the population had become settled in small cities and towns by the end of the 1960's. Inspired by the worldwide anticolonial movement, the new urban elite began to form modern nationalist political movements. After 1966, the U.N. General Assembly passed several resolutions calling for a U.N.-supervised referendum in the Western Sahara to enable the indigenous population to exercise freely its right to self-determination and independence. At the same time, Morocco and Mauritania asserted his-

torical claims to the area and argued that the results of any true consultation with the people of the territory would be favorable to their respective causes and countries.

In May 1975, an 8-day U.N. visiting mission led by representatives of Iran, the Ivory Coast, and Cuba, which traveled all over the Western Sahara, concluded that "the population, or at least almost all those persons encountered by the mission, was categorically for independence and against the territorial claims of Morocco and Mauritania." Moreover, they said the Polisario Front—Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia El Hamra and Rio De Oro, the two major regions of the Western Sahara—appeared as a dominant political force in the territory. The mission witnessed mass demonstrations in support of the movement in all parts of the territory.

Morocco and Mauritania had previously requested an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice regarding the legitimacy of their historical claims to the Western Sahara. Despite the repeated assertions I heard from virtually every Moroccan I met that the decision of the ICJ constituted a legal endorsement of their position, the truth is that the Court's ruling, which was handed down in October 1975, represented a decisive rejection of the case for Moroccan and Mauritanian sovereignty over the Western Sahara. For while the Court acknowledged indications at the time of Spanish colonization of "ties of allegiance" between the Sultan of Morocco and "some, but only some of the nomadic tribes of the territory"—along with overlapping "ties" between "almost all the nomadic tribes of Western Sahara" and the "Mauritanian entity"—it declared that these historic ties did not amount to "effective and exclusive state activity" and therefore did "not establish any tie of territorial sovereignty between the territory of Western Sahara and the Kingdom of Morocco or the Mauritanian entity." The people of the territory, therefore, were entitled to determine their own future as provided for in numerous U.N. resolutions.

Despite this adverse ruling, Morocco and Mauritania pursued their claims to the Western Sahara. In November 1975, while General Franco lay on his deathbed in Madrid and the Spanish Government was politically incapacitated by the impending succession crisis, Morocco launched its dramatic "Green March," in which 350,000 Moroccans, armed only with the Koran in one hand and the Moroccan flag in the other, walked into the Sahara in a modern ritual of manifest destiny. Confronted in a moment of internal political disarray, Spain signed the tripartite Madrid Agreement on November 14, under which it agreed to withdraw from the Western Sahara by February 28, 1976.

Although the Madrid Accords established a Moroccan-Mauritanian "interim government" in the territory, they also provided for the collaboration of the Jema'a, the largely Spanish-picked local territorial council; declared that the views of the Saharan population, as expressed through the Jema'a, "will be respected" and mandated that the U.N. Secretary-General be informed of the various measures taken. Convoled by the Polisario Front only weeks after the Madrid Accords, the Jema'a voted to dissolve itself and transfer its authority to the Polisario. Reassembled a few months later, however, by Morocco and Mauritania, it agreed to the partition of the Western Sahara between the two claimants. But the withdrawing Spanish authorities refused to attend this decisive session on the ground that the U.N. Secretary General had declined to send a representative to legitimate

the consultation, and to this day the Spanish have contended that the second Jema'a vote did not constitute a free and genuine expression of the will of the Saharan people. In April 1976, Morocco and Mauritania, claiming that a legitimate act of self-determination had already taken place, officially partitioned the Sahara, with the former annexing the more populous and phosphate-rich northern two-thirds and the latter taking the southern third.

As the Moroccan and Mauritanian military moved in during late 1975, the Polisario helped organize an exodus of much of the territory's population to Tindouf, Algeria, where a refugee camp for Sahelian drought victims had already been established. In the years that followed, the Front conducted an increasingly successful hit-and-run war for independence from its Algerian rear base, backed by military supplies and financial aid from Algeria and Libya. Last August an exhausted Mauritania, unwilling to defend itself further against increasingly effective Polisario attacks, signed a peace treaty with the Polisario, renouncing all territorial claims in the Western Sahara. In a secret annex to the treaty, Mauritania stipulated that it would turn over its section of the Sahara—called the Tiris el Gharbia—to the Polisario in 7 months. But Morocco, unwilling to permit the Polisario to establish itself in the southern part of the territory and determined in any case to assert its historic claim to the entire Western Sahara, promptly and forcibly annexed the Tiris as its 37th province.

Since January 1979, the Polisario has also mounted a series of attacks on a stretch of southern Morocco which is largely populated by Saharan exiles and related ethnic groups. Their purpose is evidently to further sap Morocco's will to continue the war in much the same way they succeeded through similar attacks against Mauritania in eroding Mauritania's commitment to the conflict. In the Western Sahara itself over 50,000 Moroccan troops are increasingly confined to a handful of urban enclaves—both north and south of the original demarcation line—where they are regularly besieged by a growing Polisario contingent of at least 12,000–15,000 full-time guerrillas.

The Polisario military success in the last year has been matched by its growing diplomatic support. At the recent summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Monrovia, Liberia, a resolution calling for a cease-fire and internationally supervised referendum to determine the political future of the Western Sahara was adopted by a vote of 33 to 2 with 8 abstentions. This resolution was based on the report and recommendations of an OAU "wise men's" committee consisting of Presidents Nimeiri of Sudan, Obasanjo of Nigeria, Traoré of Mali, Touré of Guinea, and Nyerere of Tanzania. The subsequent Nonaligned Conference in Havana endorsed the OAU's recommendations and condemned Morocco's forcible seizure of the Tiris el Gharbia following the Polisario-Mauritania peace treaty. The United Nations, which has consistently called for self-determination and specifically invited an OAU role, seems prepared to make a similar expression. The Polisario's government-in-exile, the Sahara Arab Democratic Republic, has now been recognized by 32 mainly African States. Their ranks comprise not only the more "radical" regimes like Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Benin, but also "conservative" countries like Togo and Rwanda and "moderate" governments like Mexico, Tanzania, and Uganda.

The reasons for Morocco's persistence in the Sahara include: a powerful nationalism which has in recent times generated claims to all of Mauritania and parts of Algeria and Senegal as well; King Hassan's use of the "national cause" as a means of bolstering his internal political standing; control over Saharan phosphates by a country which already provides 40 percent of world phosphates exports and could significantly enhance its market power by adding an additional 20 to 25 percent from Bu Craa; and a concern about the appearance of a shift in the regional power balance in favor of the Polisario's Algerian and Libyan backers. For Algeria, what began in 1975 as a strategic political counter to Moroccan expansionism and perhaps a quest for a more secure passageway to the Atlantic to facilitate the profitable development of its own iron mines at Gara Djebilet, has since ripened into an ideological commitment to the same sort of armed struggle for self-determination that Algeria itself engaged in two decades earlier and that constitutes an important asset for Algeria's Third World diplomacy.

III

When I began my visit to the region, I leaned toward the view that there might well be a convincing strategic and political case for changing our arms sales policy toward Morocco. But I came away from my trip persuaded that the proposed sale of offensive arms to Morocco for use in the Western Sahara would have significantly negative consequences for U.S. foreign policy and that the advantages cited in behalf of such a course of action are either minimal or nonexistent.

In the first place, it would be a fundamental contradiction of the principles on which our country was founded, as well as our commitment to human rights, if we were to assist in the suppression of a genuinely indigenous and internationally recognized effort to achieve self-determination, particularly in the absence of any compelling strategic considerations to the contrary.

Although Moroccan spokesmen have charged that the Polisario is mainly an Algerian creation and that its following consists largely of Algerian mercenaries and Sahelian refugees, these allegations are contradicted by the reports of more objective observers. It was the 1975 U.N. visiting mission, dominated by representatives of two conservative states—Iran and the Ivory Coast—which first brought the Polisario Front's dominant political position in the Sahara to the world's attention. More recent reports by area specialists, journalists and veteran observers of African liberation movements who have visited the Front's refugee camps in Tindouf and traveled with guerrilla units in the Sahara conclude that the Polisario is overwhelmingly based on the indigenous Western Saharan population, that it has managed to create a national as opposed to a purely tribal sense of political consciousness, and that it has achieved an extraordinary degree of independent organizational competence.¹ As a leading Spanish official with long experience of the Western Sahara problem commented, "The Polisario has created a nation."²

¹ U.S. Policy and the Conflict in the Western Sahara, hearings before the Subcommittees on Africa and on International Organizations, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 96th Cong., 1st sess., July 23-24, 1979, Washington: GPO, 1979.

² Those not familiar with the Western Sahara have sometimes tended to connect the Polisario with the Palestine Liberation Organization. Despite their similar names they have little in common. The PLO is formally committed to the establishment of a Palestinian state and the elimination of an existing state, Israel, while the Polisario is committed only to the establishment of a Saharan state and does not aim to eliminate Morocco as an independent country. The PLO has also conducted acts of terrorism against civilians, whereas the Polisario campaign is directed against military rather than civilian targets.

Some have questioned the viability of an independent Saharan state in view of the Spanish census of 1974 which revealed only 74,000 inhabitants. However, both the U.N. visiting mission and more recent studies suggest that the Spanish count omitted significant numbers of nomads and tens of thousands of exiles in Morocco and Mauritania who had fled the combined French-Spanish repression of 1958. If one also adds those in neighboring countries—especially Mauritania—who have an ethnic or familial connection to the Saharans and would be inclined to cast their lot with an independent Saharan state, it is reasonable to estimate a population of at least 125,000 to 150,000.³ In any case, with its natural resources of phosphates and its rich coastal fisheries, not to mention possibilities for iron and oil, the Western Sahara should not have great difficulty in supporting its modest population.

Because of the character of the conflict and the nature of the weapons it is using, the impression has developed in some Western circles that the Polisario is the cutting edge of Soviet expansion in the Maghreb. Actually, based on my personal conversations with the Polisario leadership as well as other sources, it would appear that the front is neither pro-Marxist nor pro-Soviet. In response to questions, the Polisario leaders indicated that, in the context of an independent Saharan state, they would be inclined for economic, cultural, and geopolitical reasons, to look toward the West, not the East, for support. In fact, they are the only major liberation movement in Africa that has not received direct Soviet, Cuban, or Chinese military assistance. A substantial amount of their equipment is Soviet in origin, but this has been transferred from Algeria and Libya, which purchased the arms with hard currency. There is no evidence that the Soviets, who have a substantial investment in Moroccan phosphates, have approved or encouraged these transfers and indeed no Eastern bloc country has yet recognized the Polisario government-in-exile. The Polisario's main political effort in Europe has been directed toward the West European Democratic Socialist Parties, not the East European Communist Parties.

Concerning future intraregional relations, the Front's leadership acknowledges its intention to maintain close relations with Algeria but also places considerable emphasis on the necessity for cooperation with Morocco "since we share 500 kilometers of border with Morocco but only 50 with Algeria." As an illustration of their desire for a negotiated settlement they cite the clause in the Mauritania-Polisario Peace Treaty which would have delayed a Polisario administration for 7 months, thereby providing the King with an opportunity to save face in the context of his joining a diplomatic negotiation.

Given its diplomatic preferences, the Polisario Front has refrained from asking the Soviets for military support because it does not want to internationalize the conflict. But if the United States changes its policy and begins to provide Morocco with new counterinsurgency equipment for use in the Western Sahara, it could push the Front toward global alignments which would be unfavorable to our own interests in the region. In any case, while we may not have any real interest in facilitating the establishment of a Saharan homeland in

³ This is the conclusion of a forthcoming Ford Foundation-sponsored study of the Western Saharan issue by Tony Hodges. See also footnote 1 above.

the Western Sahara, neither do we have any significant interest in preventing it.

Second, according to U.S. military experts, the Moroccan army is unlikely to achieve anything more than marginal improvements in its unfavorable military position no matter what equipment we provide. The major weaknesses of the Moroccan military in the Western Sahara are in the areas of communications, command, and control. The problem lies in the King's refusal to grant his field commanders enough autonomy to communicate directly with each other and to react quickly to local circumstances. Since King Hassan fears a renewal of the coup attempts of 1971 and 1972, he continues to insist on overcentralized communications and command structures. Thus, several hours often pass between a reported attack on a Moroccan garrison and the arrival of nearby airpower, since the request has to go through Rabat. Furthermore, field commanders lack the authority to embark on preventive patrolling. These conditions also help sap military morale, as do the unfavorable climate, the increasing number of Polisario guerrillas, and the gap between largely incompetent—but loyal—corrupt senior officers and middle or lower ranking cadres. Sophisticated American arms, however generously supplied, will prove ineffective in the absence of a significant improvement in the ability of the Moroccan army to effectively integrate them into its order of battle.

Third, a change in our arms sales policy toward Morocco would probably halt the improvement that has taken place in our economic and political relationship with Algeria, which is the Polisario's major external supporter. In recent years Algeria has become a much more important economic partner of the United States than Morocco. Thus Algeria provides 9 percent of our crude oil imports—16 percent of East Coast imports—and 2 percent of our total natural gas consumption; U.S. firms have won over \$6 billion in construction contracts since the early 1970's; and Export-Import Bank loans and guarantees now total \$1.4 billion.

Politically, Algeria tends to be remembered for its militant sponsorship of a New International Economic Order as well as support for a potpourri of national liberation movements. However, there is strong evidence, particularly since the election of Chadli Benjedid to succeed the late Houari Boumedienne as President in February 1979, that Algeria has begun to take more moderate positions on a number of international issues which are consistent with our own policy objectives. The Algerians worked with Yugoslavia and India at Havana in the effort to prevent Cuba from directing the non-aligned movement toward a distinctly pro-Soviet position; favored a peaceful resolution of the conflict between North and South Yemen at a time when the Soviets were supporting the latter in the use of military forces; opposed Soviet policy in Ethiopia and Uganda by supporting the Eritreans and the Tanzanian-aided overthrow of Idi Amin; and stiffened their previously tolerant attitude toward airplane hijacking.

In the course of my conversations with high Algerian officials, they privately acknowledged that the State of Israel is a "historical reality" whose existence must be taken into account in the context of a comprehensive resolution of the conflict in the Middle East, criticized Cuba's overambitious policy in Africa and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and expressed interest in purchasing U.S. military sup-

plies. Furthermore, unlike Boumedienne, Benjedid appears to be much more of a pragmatist than an ideologue, and there is reason to believe that, if and when the new Algerian President consolidates his power, the stage will be set for further progress in the relations between our two countries. But such an improvement will probably become much more difficult to achieve if, in the interim, we abandon our policy of neutrality and tilt in favor of Morocco by providing it with arms for use in the Sahara.

Fourth, a change in our arms-sales policy would have adverse consequences for our relations with a number of important African and Third World countries. The OAU summit's overwhelming approval last July of the recommendations of its wise men for a cease-fire and internationally supervised referendum constituted a real watershed in Africa's view of the Western Sahara issue. It represented a clear turn away from the Organization's previous temporizing approach, reflecting both the Polisario's military and diplomatic gains and the wise men's own research into an unresolved problem of self-determination.

Of course OAU resolutions do not, in and of themselves, convey the intensity of African feeling on an issue, or the extent to which an apparently opposed U.S. policy could affect our African relations. Obviously the Western Sahara is not going to replace Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, Namibia, and South Africa as the main area of African interest in international affairs. Yet I was impressed by OAU chairman and Liberian President Tolbert's observation that the OAU vote indicated "a clear consensus in Africa for self-determination in the Western Sahara" and that "Africa would look with much disfavor" upon a change in our arms sales policy. Other important friends of the United States in Africa, particularly Nigeria and Tanzania, who have appreciated the determination of the Carter administration to view African problems in an African context, would also see such a change in policy as an implicit repudiation of the new direction in which the President has steered our African policy. While few states are likely to permit bilateral relations with the United States to suffer due to this issue alone, a change in our policy could contribute to cumulative downturns where there are also other matters of concern.

In the aftermath of the OAU vote, we are seeing growing support for the Polisario position at the United Nations, in other world forums, and in individual acts of diplomatic recognition. Because the United States must seek diplomatic support in a variety of multilateral institutions, it would be a serious mistake to antagonize African and Third World nations on a major issue unless there were compelling strategic and political interests at stake. For example, at the World Health Assembly last June, and in a variety of international meetings subsequently, it was the voting strength of the Africans which blocked Arab efforts to take punitive action against Egypt and Israel. The African group in the non-aligned movement joined with others to successfully block efforts at Havana to expel Egypt. A decision on the part of the United States to provide Morocco with offensive arms—clearly contradicting the OAU resolution calling for a cease-fire and an exercise in self-determination—could make it more difficult for us to attain such support from African and other Third World countries in the future.

Fifth, a decision to provide Morocco with new arms suitable for use in the Sahara would require us simultaneously to change our interpretation of the 1960 United States-Morocco military agreement under which Morocco is not permitted to use American weapons outside of its internationally recognized borders. Such a reinterpretation would constitute a significant retreat from the administration's own efforts to prevent U.S. arms exports from contributing to dangerous military conflicts abroad.

For almost 2 years we have maintained a policy of refusing to sell Morocco the equipment in question precisely because Morocco refuses to abide by our existing interpretation of the 1960 agreement which prohibits the use of U.S. weapons in the Sahara. In fact, Morocco today continues to use our F-5 aircraft and 106 mm. recoilless guns in the Western Sahara⁴ despite official U.S. requests to redeploy such equipment to Morocco proper. For us now to revise our interpretation of the agreement in order to sell Morocco new arms for the Sahara would be to condone Morocco's past behavior and invite similar violations of U.S. restrictions elsewhere.

Part of the rationale for both new equipment and a new interpretation of the bilateral accord is that since the Polisario has launched an intensified series of attacks on southern Morocco, Morocco now needs to use U.S. arms in the Sahara in order to defend its own recognized borders. However, it is one thing to countenance Morocco's occasional use of American equipment to respond to specific attacks upon its internationally recognized territory and quite another to revise our interpretation of the bilateral military accord in the context of Morocco's continuing campaign to enforce its claim of sovereignty in the Western Sahara—a claim which has not been recognized by a single country in the world. Such action would clearly go against the grain of our Government's past support for the international legal doctrine of "proportionate" reprisal under which we have accepted only limited use by Israel of American military equipment in its effort to strike back at PLO terrorists in southern Lebanon.

Another element of the proposed reinterpretation is the notion that Morocco's "administrative authority" over the Western Sahara justifies its use of U.S. equipment for "internal defense and security" in the administered areas. But this would require us to ignore the clear intention of the international community to deal with the Western Sahara problem by political, not military, action, as well as our own statements of support for a regional solution. The OAU has specifically called for the "preparation of an atmosphere suitable for peace in the region through an immediate and general cease-fire." In testimony before the House Subcommittee on Africa, Nicholas Veliotis, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs declared, "We hope that the issue can be solved on a regional basis, specifically by the OAU," and Harold Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, said "We have offered to help [the OAU and other mediators] in any way that we can."⁵

⁴ "U.S. Policy and the Conflict in the Western Sahara," p. 153.

⁵ Economic and Military Assistance Programs in Africa," Subcommittees on Africa and on International Organizations, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 95th Cong., 2d sess., Mar. 1, 1978, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1978, p. 156; "U.S. Policy and the Conflict in the Western Sahara," p. 103.

Finally, whatever the legal case for permitting Morocco to defend that part of the Sahara over which it has exercised de facto administrative control since 1975, there would appear to be no merit in the argument that Morocco should be allowed to use American military equipment in that part of the Western Sahara which Morocco recently moved into over the opposition of its former Mauritanian partner. It is hard to see how giving Morocco permission to utilize American military equipment throughout the Western Sahara could be in any way squared with the relevant legislation's reference to "legitimate self-defense." It would in fact be seen by the world as a reward for aggression.

IV

In view of the demonstrable disadvantages associated with the administration's newly announced policy of providing Morocco with arms specifically suitable for use in the Western Sahara, what are the presumed advantages which would result from this course?

Some have argued that we should alter our existing arms sales policy in order to maintain or enhance our mutually beneficial relationship with the pro-Western regime in Morocco, or even to prevent a friendly King from having to give up his throne because he had to give up the Western Sahara.

There is no doubt that Morocco has been helpful in a variety of ways to the West in general, and the United States in particular. The Moroccan Government does, for example, permit port visits by our ships and refueling stops by our airplanes. It helped facilitate the initial Sadat-Begin contacts which later culminated in the Camp David Agreements. And it sent troops to Zaïre's Shaba province to protect Western interests at the time of the second invasion of Zaïre by Katangan exiles living in Angola.

On the other hand, if our relationship with Morocco is to be seen in its proper perspective, it should also be noted that Morocco has occasionally acted in ways that are not compatible with our regional concerns: it dispatched three brigades to fight against Israel in the 1973 War; it voted for the 1975 U.N. resolution stating that "Zionism is a form of racism"; it joined the other hard-line Arab states at the Baghdad summit in October 1978 in denouncing the peace treaty between Israel and Egypt; it has severed diplomatic relations with Cairo; and it excluded an Egyptian delegation from the Islamic Conference at Fez last spring. Consequently, while we clearly have an interest in a close and constructive relationship with Morocco, we have no obligation, morally or politically, to support Morocco in what is essentially an unjust and unwinnable war.

Fortunately, there are other ways in which we can indicate a continuing responsiveness to Morocco's legitimate diplomatic and military requirements. We could, for example, continue to provide Morocco with arms primarily designed for the defense of Morocco rather than the annexation of the Western Sahara, while increasing the level of our economic and humanitarian assistance. Last spring when the administration was reviewing its arms sales policy toward Morocco, it indicated that our refusal to provide Morocco with offensive arms had caused a significant strain in the overall relationship between our two countries. Yet in spite of that, King Hassan and his principal advisers recently described the state of United States-Moroccan relations as "excellent." In part, this reflected U.S. cooperation in the return airlift

of Moroccan troops from Shaba, Congress recent decision to increase the amount of overall military aid by 50 percent, and the administration's earlier approval of the sale of U.S.-licensed, Italian-made Chinook helicopters contracted for prior to the imposition of our Saharan restrictions, as well as spare parts and ammunition for previously supplied F-5 aircraft.

The Moroccan Government also has its own interest in maintaining good relations with the United States even if there continue to be restrictions on the use of our military equipment. After France, we are Morocco's greatest Western source of economic and military assistance, and our moderating diplomatic influence would be an important trump card for Morocco in an eventual negotiation to end the war in the Sahara. In fact, the Moroccan leaders with whom I spoke put much more emphasis on the need for U.S. diplomatic understanding than they did on the need for new arms. Needless to say, it is inconceivable that the conservative Moroccan leadership would turn in spite toward the Soviets even in the unlikely event that the latter wished to antagonize the Third World by associating itself with a war against self-determination. Therefore, to the extent that we continue to be responsive to the Moroccan Government's need for defensive arms, economic assistance and diplomatic ties, our refusal to supply the requested counterinsurgency equipment should not occasion a serious break in our relationship with the King.

Some have speculated that a willingness to be more forthcoming in the sale of offensive American arms would encourage Morocco to reverse its current opposition to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, thereby advancing U.S. interests in the Middle East. But a more credible reading is that the King has decided to sever relations with Egypt and refrain from supporting the Camp David process because he clearly believes that the opposite course would be incompatible with his own political interest in avoiding isolation within the Arab world. In this connection, it is worth noting that the Saudis, who steadfastly oppose the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, are now Morocco's leading source of external assistance and have offered to pay for any new American arms. To the extent that Morocco is relying on Saudi Arabia for financial assistance in acquiring the arms it hopes for from the United States, it is exceedingly unlikely that the King would take a course of action that would be unwelcome to his Saudi supporters.

Some are also persuaded that, in view of the impressive mobilization of the Moroccan people during the Green March and their continued overt support of the war for the Sahara, the King could not survive politically if he agreed to substantial concessions to the Polisario. Thus they urge a change in our arms sales policy to enable a relatively pro-Western regime to continue in power. Yet both governmental analysts and journalists have detected a growing war-weariness in Morocco during the last year, evidenced by private antiwar expression among the heavily taxed upper-middle class, widespread strikes by workers unwilling to sacrifice for the "national cause," and reports of antiwar sentiment in important sections of the army. Notwithstanding the diverse discontents caused by the conflict and its consequences, the Moroccan political parties—from the Communists on the Left to the Istiqlal nationalists on the Right—do tend to be more monarchical than the monarch on this issue. And the King has legitimate reason to

fear that a *precipitate* withdrawal from the Sahara could lead to his own downfall. A number of well-informed U.S. experts believe, however, that the King might well be able to prepare his country for a realistic but face-saving settlement. Indeed it is quite possible that the King faces greater risks to his throne—from both the Right and the Left—by continuing an unwinnable and expensive war than by moving carefully to end it. In this sense, the sale of offensive American arms to Morocco for use in the Sahara may do more ultimately to undermine the monarchy than to shore it up.

The real threat to the King is not from without but from within. If there is no way he can militarily drive the Polisario from the field, there is also no way the Polisario can militarily force Morocco out of the Western Sahara. But by encouraging the King to maintain the illusion that a military victory is possible, we are much more likely to prolong the war than to shorten it. And with Morocco spending a million dollars a day on a war it cannot win the King will be less able to deal with the festering problems within Morocco itself.

Recognizing the overriding U.S. interest in preventing the internationalization of what has thus far been a localized crisis, the Administration has argued that a change in policy would increase our influence with Morocco, putting us in a better position to urge a negotiated solution of the conflict. In reality, the proposed arms sales would be more likely to have the opposite effect. During the course of my conversations with the King and his chief military advisers, they made it clear that they looked toward U.S. arms for the Sahara as a means of producing a quick Moroccan victory. To the extent that Moroccan decisionmakers believe that a military victory is possible—in spite of the opinion of knowledgeable military analysts that such a victory is impossible—our selling Morocco arms suitable for use in the Sahara would not encourage it to make the concessions necessary for a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Morocco's failure to explore new negotiating possibilities at the time of the Mauritanian-Polisario treaty, its forcible annexation of the ex-Mauritanian sector, and its continued refusal to admit that it is fighting an indigenous foe in the Western Sahara, all suggest that new American arms will be used with the aim of securing a military victory rather than to facilitate a negotiated settlement. On the other hand, an ineffectual but provocative U.S. policy change is likely to result in a hardening of the Algerian and Polisario positions, and to the extent that their cooperation is necessary for a peaceful resolution of the problem it will probably reduce the chances for a negotiated settlement.

Most important, the longer the conflict goes on the greater are the risks of escalation and internationalization. With the Polisario now engaged in periodic raids against Morocco proper, the King is under considerable pressure from frustrated military commanders and an angry population to strike back at the main Polisario bases in Algeria. So far Morocco has acted with great restraint in responding to these Polisario incursions. But the possibility of regular Moroccan forces engaging in "hot pursuit" of Polisario guerrillas, and coming into conflict with the Algerian army, cannot be dismissed. Lately Egypt has become somewhat involved in the conflict by shipping Morocco light arms and ammunition. Until now, the Polisario Front has refrained from large-scale recruitment of ethnic Saharans living in Mauritania or from using Mauritanian territory to mount attacks on

Moroccan positions in the Sahara. Nor has it acted to obtain advanced military equipment or advisers from the Soviet Union and Cuba. If we change our policy, the Eastern bloc countries could see an opportunity to gain an advantage, particularly in view of the Polisario's favorable military prospects and widespread diplomatic support, and move to become involved in a conflict from which they have thus far abstained.

Finally, some have suggested that a change in our arms sales policy would be seen by other countries as a manifestation of our willingness to help a friend in need and would therefore bolster our overall global credibility in the aftermath of perceived defeats in Angola, Iran, and Nicaragua. While there are some countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt which would be clearly pleased by such a development, even they do not view our arms sales policy toward Morocco as a litmus test of our determination to come to the aid of friendly countries. For example, the Saudis assigned an infinitely higher priority to U.S. military support of neighboring North Yemen when it was attacked by South Yemen last year than they do to U.S. military assistance to Morocco in the Sahara. Other friends of the United States with interests in the region would be very displeased, particularly Spain—whose Prime Minister has declared that self-determination has not yet taken place and whose governing party recognizes the Polisario Front as the legitimate representative of the Saharan people. The French position is characteristically ambiguous. While abandoning previous official rhetoric against “microstates” and placing some restrictions on arms deliveries and new arms contracts for Morocco, the French would apparently like the United States to assume a military role that they themselves have partially relinquished due to their own interests in Algeria, Africa, and the Third World.

Actually, a change in our arms sales policy would virtually guarantee the very crisis of credibility that it purports to avoid. Since the equipment in question would not significantly alter the Moroccan military and diplomatic position, it would simply link us more closely with a deteriorating situation. As in Angola, increased U.S. military involvement without corresponding prospects for military success could lead to a widening international credibility gap and domestic recriminations as well. On the other hand, to the extent that we provide Morocco with arms for its own self-defense but not for use in the Sahara, we can maintain that we are willing to help our friends, but not by providing assistance in a war of dubious legitimacy which has attracted virtually no international support. At the same time, we could explain to the Saudis and Egyptians that U.S. arms cannot reverse Morocco's military and diplomatic decline but might provoke a dangerous escalation, and we could encourage them to work for a political solution.

V

Beyond providing Morocco with additional assistance for its legitimate military and economic concerns while maintaining a policy of neutrality in the dispute in the Western Sahara, there are other things that the United States could do to advance its interests in the region.

Our primary objective should be to facilitate a resolution of the conflict. Unfortunately, a negotiated settlement will not be easy to achieve. On both the substance of a solution as well as the modalities of a negotiation the parties to the conflict are far apart. Morocco, contending

that the Polisario is not a free agent, insists on solving the problem through bilateral discussions with Algeria, which it firmly believes holds the key to a solution. Algeria, on the other hand, takes the position that the conflict in the Sahara is between the Polisario and Morocco, and that any negotiation to bring the war to an end should be between them. Similarly, while Morocco is prepared to accept a settlement based on the principle of autonomy within the framework of Moroccan sovereignty, but is not willing to consider a withdrawal from the Western Sahara, the Polisario is insisting on complete independence (or at least the right of self-determination which, in their view, would produce the same result) and categorically rejects the possibility of accepting autonomy in lieu of sovereignty.

It probably would not be appropriate for the United States to take the initiative in seeking a negotiated settlement of the conflict. We could, however, quietly encourage other interested parties, such as Spain, Saudi Arabia, France, and the OAU, to take the initiative in moving the dispute from the battlefield to the conference table.

Whether or not the final determination of Western Saharan sovereignty comes through an internationally supervised referendum (as recommended by the OAU and other international organizations),⁶ other possible arrangements which might be conducive to compromise include: the establishment of a loose political and economic confederation in the region as one means of providing the Polisario with a political entity in the Western Sahara while simultaneously saving King Hassan's diplomatic face; joint Moroccan-Western Saharan ownership and management of the phosphate mine at Bu Craa—currently Morocco owns 65 percent and Spain 35 percent, although there has been no production for several years due to wartime insecurity; and provision for continued Moroccan access to sub-Saharan Africa through minor adjustments in the borders of an independent Western Sahara.

We should also quietly ease the existing prohibitions on contracts between our diplomats and Polisario officials and on visits by our diplomatic personnel to the Moroccan-held areas of the Western Sahara. These self-imposed restrictions were originally based on a well-intentioned desire to appear neutral on the substance of the dispute. But for us to continue these restrictions in the current circumstances is to deprive ourselves of the information needed for rational decisionmaking on a major world problem. We paid a significant political price for depriving ourselves of such potentially informative contacts in Iran, and there is no reason to make the same mistake again.

The case of the Western Sahara illustrates the need to avoid an approach to foreign policy problems that poses a stark contrast between a "globalist" position of supporting our friends regardless of the indigenous realities and a "regionalist" position of adapting to local circumstances regardless of international implications. It is true that Morocco is a friend in difficulty but there is more than one way that we can respond to its need for external assistance. Under existing circumstances the sale of counterinsurgency military equipment to Morocco for use in its war of annexation in the Western Sahara is compatible neither with our ideals nor our interests.

⁶ While the modalities of such a referendum would be complex, they would not be insuperable given a modicum of goodwill on all sides. In this connection, the very detailed Spanish census of 1974 could serve as a helpful, if incomplete, means of establishing a list of eligible voters.

APPENDIX 1

THE MADRID ACCORD

AGREEMENT BETWEEN MOROCCO, MAURITANIA AND SPAIN ON THE QUESTION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA

At a meeting in Madrid on 14 November 1975 the representatives of the governments of Spain, Morocco and Mauritania reached agreement on the following principles:

(1) Spain reaffirms its decision, repeated countless times at the United Nations, to decolonize the territory of the Western Sahara by putting an end to the responsibilities and powers which it holds as the administrative authority.

(2) In view of this decision, and in conformity with the negotiations between the interested parties recommended by the U.N., Spain will proceed immediately to set up an interim government in the territory with the participation of Morocco and Mauritania and the collaboration of the Yema'a. The responsibilities and powers referred to in the previous paragraph will be transferred to these governments.

To this end, it has been agreed that two deputy governors shall be appointed, one proposed by Morocco, the other by Mauritania, to assist the governor-general of the territory in the execution of his duties.

The Spanish presence in the territory will finally come to an end before 28 February 1976.

(3) The views of the Saharan population, as expressed through the Yema'a, will be respected.

(4) The three countries will inform the Secretary-General of the U.N. of the measures taken under the heading of the present document as a result of negotiations which took place in conformity with Article 33 of the U.N. Charter.

(5) The three countries party to the agreement declare that they reached the preceding conclusions in the best spirit of understanding, brotherhood and respect for the principles of the U.N. Charter and as their own contribution to the preservation of peace and international security.

(6) This document will become operative on the day of publication in the Official State Bulletin of the law relating to the decolonization of the Sahara which authorizes the Spanish government to carry out the undertakings contained in this document.

APPENDIX 2

FULL TEXT OF THE PEACE TREATY SIGNED IN ALGIERS ON AUGUST 5, 1979 BETWEEN THE POLISARIO FRONT AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

On 3, 4 and 5 August 1979, a Mauritanian delegation led by Lt. Col. Ahmed Salem Ould Sidi, second vice-president of the Military Committee for National Salvation, Minister in Charge of the Headquarters Committee, comprising:

Lt. Col. Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, member of the Military Committee for National Salvation, head of the army general staff

and, a Saharaoui delegation, led by Bachir Mustapha Sayed, under-secretary-general of the Polisario Front, member of the Executive Committee and the Command Council of the Revolution, comprising:

Mohamed Salem Ould Salek, Minister for Information, member of the Political Bureau of the Polisario Front and of the Saharaoui National Council and Mahmoud Abdelfattah, representative of the European Department of the Polisario Front, met in Algiers, capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria, and, after negotiations have agreed on the following:

1. Considering the strict observance by the two parties, Mauritanian and Saharaoui, of the Sacred Principles of the OAU and the U.N. Charters regarding the right of peoples to self-determination and the inviolability of the frontiers inherited from colonial times.

2. Considering the sincere wishes of the two parties to establish a just and final peace between the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Polisario Front in accordance with the principles of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and neighborly relations.

3. Considering the urgent need for the two parties to find a global and final solution to the conflict which guarantees full national rights for the Saharaoui people and stability and peace throughout the region.

I. (A) The Islamic Republic of Mauritania solemnly declares that it does not have and will not have territorial or any other claims over Western Sahara,

(B) The Islamic Republic of Mauritania decides to withdraw from the unjust war in Western Sahara in accordance with the modalities agreed upon jointly with the representative of the Saharaoui people, the Polisario Front.

II. The Polisario Front solemnly declares that it does not have and will not have territorial or any other claims as regards Mauritania.

III. The Polisario Front, on behalf of the Saharaoui people, and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania decide to sign between them, a final peace agreement.

IV. The two parties have decided to hold periodic meetings with each other to look after the implementation of the modalities mentioned in the paragraph I, paragraph B.

V. The two parties will transmit this peace treaty immediately after its signature to the Acting President of the OAU, to members of the Ad-Hoc Committee, the Secretary General of the OAU and the U.N., as well as the Acting President of the Non-Aligned."

SECRET PART : MODALITIES OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT

1. Considering the public part of the present agreements.

2. Considering the necessity of a just and final peace based on total respect for the respective territorial integrity and sovereignty of the two brotherly Saharaoui and Mauritanian peoples, the sole guaranty of the establishment of a climate of comprehension, understanding and cooperation between the two peoples.

3. Considering that the Polisario Front is the sole legitimate representative of the people of the Western Sahara.

I. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania undertakes to put an end to its presence in the Western Sahara and to hand over directly to the Polisario Front the part of the Western Sahara that it controls within 7 months from the date of the signing of the present agreement.

For the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Lt. Col. AHMED SALEM OULD SIDI,

*Second Vice President of the Military Committee for National Salvation,
Minister in Charge of the Headquarters Committee.*

For the F. Polisario,

BACHIR MUSTAPHA SAYED,

*Under Secretary-General of the Polisario Front, Member of the Executive
Committee and the Command Council of the Revolution.*

ALGIERS, August 5, 1979.

APPENDIX 3

MOST RECENT OAU RESOLUTION ON THE WESTERN SAHARA, ADOPTED 33-2 WITH 8 ABSTENTIONS

[AHG/Dec. 114 (XVI)]

QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity meeting in its Sixteenth Ordinary Session in Monrovia, Liberia, from 17 to 20 July 1979,

Having heard the introduction by the outgoing Chairman and Chairman of the Ad-Hoc Committee of Heads of State on Western Sahara on the Committee's report on the Question of Western Sahara,

Having discussed the question of Western Sahara.

Having exhaustively considered the report of its Ad-Hoc Committee contained in Doc.AHG/93 (XVI) which included reports of the Sub-Committee of the Ad-Hoc Committee on its mission to Algeria, Mauritania and Morocco, and that of the OAU Secretary-General in the company of the Ambassadors of Mali and Nigeria to Spain.

Considering the fact that all the parties concerned except Morocco agree that the rights of self-determination for the people of Sahara has not been fulfilled,

Also considering that tripartite agreement between Spain, Morocco and Mauritania transferred only administration of the territory to Morocco and Mauritania and not sovereignty,

Aware of the fact that Morocco maintains that the right of self-determination has been exercised by the Saharouis through the Assembly known as the Djemaa :

DECIDES the following :

1. The preparation of a proper atmosphere for peace in the area through a general and immediate ceasefire ;

2. The exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara in a general and free referendum which will enable them to choose one of the following options :

(a) Total independence,

(b) Maintenance of the status quo.

3. The convening of a meeting of the parties concerned including the representative of Western Sahara to request their cooperation for the implementation of this decision.

4. The establishment of a Special Committee of Five OAU Member States composing of Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Sudan and Tanzania to work out the modalities and to supervise the organization of a referendum with the co-operation of the United Nations on the basis of one person one vote. The Special Committee shall be chaired by Liberia, the Current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

APPENDIX 4

RECOMMENDATION OF THE OAU AD HOC COMMITTEE OF HEADS OF STATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION AHG/Dec 114 (XVI) Rev 1 ON THE QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA

The OAU Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State on Western Sahara Established by decision AHG/Dec 114 (XVI) Rev 1 meeting in its third session from 4 to 5 December, 1979 at Monrovia Liberia ;

Having heard statements made by H. E. Chadli Benjedid, President of the Popular and Democratic Republic of Algeria, H. E. Mr. Ahmedou Ould Abdalla Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and H. E. Mohamed Abdel Aziz, Secretary-General of Polisario Front who were invited by the OAU current Chairman after consultations with members of the Committee on the question of Western Sahara and the situation in the Magreb region ;

Having also heard statement made by the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations by which the United Nations readiness to co-operate fully with the Ad Hoc Committee was affirmed ;

Disappointed by the absence of Morocco, a principal party to the conflict on Western Sahara ;

Having discussed exhaustively ways and means of implementing decision AHG/Dec 114 (XVI) Rev 1 on the observance of a ceasefire between the belligerent parties and the exercise of the right to self-determination by the Saharawi People through the conduct of a referendum.

Having taken note of the signing of the Peace-Treaty between Mauritania and the Polisario Front ;

1. Expressed its gratitude to the Head of State of Algeria, the Foreign Minister of Mauritania and the Secretary-General of Polisario Front for having provided valuable information to the Ad Hoc Committee on the prevailing situation in Western Sahara and the Magreb Region ;

2. Regrets the absence of Morocco, a principal party to the conflict on Western Sahara ;

3. Warmly congratulates the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for its courageous and forthright decision which led it to the conclusion of a Peace-Treaty with the Polisario Front and the withdrawal of all of its claims over the territory of Western Sahara ;

4. Urges Morocco to immediately withdraw all her troops and administration from that part of Western Sahara which was evacuated by Mauritania ;

5. Further urges all parties to the conflict to immediately effect a ceasefire in the entire territory of Western Sahara to permit the conduct of a free and fair referendum ;

6. Recommends the setting up of an OAU Peace-Keeping Force for the purpose of monitoring the ceasefire.

7. Urges the Kingdom of Morocco to cooperate fully with the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Western Sahara ;

8. Calls upon the international community not to take any action that would impair the work of the OAU Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its responsibility of finding a peaceful solution to the question of Western Sahara.

9. Requests the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to immediately conduct studies, with the cooperation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, of the technical details of decision AHG/Dec 114 (XVI) Rev 1 on Western Sahara relative to holding a referendum in the territory ;

10. Charges the current Chairman of the OAU Council of Ministers and the Secretary-General of the OAU to convey the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee to H. King Hassan II of Morocco and report back to it at its next meeting.

APPENDIX 5

FINAL DECLARATION (PORTION ON WESTERN SAHARA) OF CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE OR GOVERNMENT OF NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, SEPTEMBER 3-7, 1979, CUBA

WESTERN SAHARA

The Conference expresses its deep concern at the serious situation prevailing in Western Sahara because the decolonization process in this territory has not been carried to its conclusion in accord with United Nations General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) concerning the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

For this reason, it has recalled the decisions of the non-aligned countries and the United Nations and OAU resolutions on the question of Western Sahara, especially United Nations General Assembly resolution 3331 (XXXIII), which reaffirms the inalienable right of the Western Sahara people to self-determination and independence.

The Conference has viewed with satisfaction the recommendations of the OAU Ad Hoc Committee on Western Sahara, adopted by the Sixteenth OAU Conference of Heads of State or Government, held in Monrovia (July 1979).

Considering that these recommendations have not led to the Western Saharan people's exercise of their right to self-determination or to any transfer of the sovereignty of this territory, the Conference considers that the creation of the Special OAU Committee established at the Sixteenth OAU Summit should provide a guarantee that the Saharan people can exercise their right to self-determination and independence as soon as possible.

The Conference welcomes the agreement made between the Republic of Mauritania and the Polisario Front, and the Republic of Mauritania's decision to withdraw its forces from Western Saharan territory. The Conference deplored the armed occupation by Morocco of the southern part of Western Sahara previously administered by Mauritania. It expressed the hope that all the parties involved will co-operate in implementing the recommendations of the OAU *Ad Hoc* Committee adopted in Monrovia by the Sixteenth Summit in order to arrive at a just solution to the question of Western Sahara.

APPENDIX 6

MOST RECENT GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION ON THE WESTERN SAHARA, ADOPTED NOVEMBER 21, 1979 BY 85-6 WITH 41 ABSTENTIONS, AND VOTE BREAKDOWN

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Benin, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Congo, Cyprus, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Iran, Jamaica, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Mexico, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Panama, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia and Zambia: revised draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Having considered thoroughly the question of Western Sahara.

Recalling the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence in conformity with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and its resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

Having considered the relevant chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,¹

Having heard the statements made on the subject of Western Sahara, including the statement by the representative of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO),

Bearing in mind the profound concern of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the non-aligned countries regarding the decolonization of Western Sahara and the right of the people of that Territory to self-determination,

Recalling its resolution 33/27 of 1 December 1978 regarding co-operation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

Taking note of the decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its sixteenth ordinary session, held at Monrovia from 17 to 20 July 1979,² in which the Assembly adopted the recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Organization of African Unity on the question of Western Sahara,

Also taking note of the peace agreement concluded between the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia et-Hamra y de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) on 10 August 1979³ and the decision of Mauritania to withdraw its forces from Western Sahara,⁴

Aware of the profound concern of the United Nations, the Organizations of African Unity and the non-aligned countries at the aggravation of the situation prevailing in Western Sahara because of the continuation and extension of the occupation of that Territory,

Recalling the paragraphs dealing with the question of Western Sahara in the Political Declaration adopted by the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Havana from 3 to 9 September 1979,⁵

¹ A/34/23/Add.3, chap. X.

² A/34/552, annex III, decision AHG/Dec.114 (XVI).

³ A/34/427-S/13503, annex I.

⁴ *Ibid.*, annex II.

⁵ A/34/542, annex, sect. I, paras. 96 to 98.

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, the charter of the Organization of African Unity and the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and the legitimacy of its struggle to secure the enjoyment of that right, as provided in the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity;

2. *Takes note with satisfaction* of the decision on the question of Western Sahara adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its sixteenth ordinary session held at Monrovia;

3. *Also takes note with satisfaction* of the relevant declaration of the Sixth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries regarding the question of Western Sahara;

4. *Welcomes* the peace agreement concluded between Mauritania and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro and considers that this agreement constitutes an important contribution to the peace process with a view to a definitive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Western Sahara;

5. *Deeply deplores* the aggravation of the situation resulting from the continuation of the occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco and the extension of this occupation to the territory recently evacuated by Mauritania;

6. *Urges* Morocco to join in the peace process and terminate the occupation of the Territory of Western Sahara;

7. *Recommends* to that end that the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro, the representative of the people of Western Sahara, should participate fully in any search for a just, lasting and definitive political solution of the question of Western Sahara, in conformity with the resolutions and declarations of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the non-aligned countries;

8. *Requests* the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to continue to consider the situation in Western Sahara as a priority question and to report on this subject to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity to keep the Secretary-General of the United Nations informed of the progress achieved with regard to the implementation of the decisions of the Organization of African Unity concerning Western Sahara;

10. *Invites* the Secretary-General to follow closely the situation in Western Sahara and to submit a report on the question of Western Sahara to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE ON WESTERN SAHARA RESOLUTION, NOVEMBER 21, 1979

Yes—85 No—6 Abstain—41

Y—Afghanistan
Y—Albania
Y—Algeria
Y—Angola
Y—Argentina
Y—Australia
Y—Austria
Y—Bahamas
A—Bahrain
A—Bangladesh
Y—Barbados
A—Belgium
Y—Benin
Y—Bhutan
Bolivia
Y—Botswana
Y—Brazil
Y—Bulgaria
A—Burma
Y—Burundi
Y—Byelorussian S.S.R.
A—Canada

Y—Cape Verde
N—Central African Republic
A—Chad
A—Chile
China
A—Colombia
Comoros
Y—Congo
Y—Costa Rica
Y—Cuba
Y—Cyprus
Y—Czechoslovakia
Democratic Kampuchea
Y—Democratic Yemen
A—Denmark
Djibouti
Dominica
Dominican Republic
Y—Ecuador
A—Egypt
Y—El Salvador
N—Equatorial Guinea

GENERAL ASSEMBLY VOTE ON WESTERN SAHARA RESOLUTION, NOVEMBER 21, 1979—
Continued

Y—Ethiopia	Y—Niger
Y—Fiji	Y—Nigeria
Y—Finland	A—Norway
A—France	Oman
N—Gabon	Y—Pakistan
Gambia	Y—Panama
Y—German Democratic Republic	Y—Papua New Guinea
A—Germany, Federal Republic	A—Paraguay
Y—Ghana	Y—Peru
Y—Greece	A—Philippines
Y—Grenada	Y—Poland
N—Guatemala	A—Portugal
Guinea	A—Qatar
Y—Guinea-Bissau	Romania
Y—Guyana	Y—Rwanda
Y—Haiti	Y—Saint Lucia
Y—Honduras	Y—Samoa
Y—Hungary	Y—Sao Tome and Principe
A—Iceland	N—Saudi Arabia
Y—India	Senegal
A—Indonesia	Y—Seychelles
Y—Iran	Sierra Leone
Iraq	Y—Singapore
A—Ireland	Solomon Islands
A—Israel	Somalia
A—Italy	South Africa
A—Ivory Coast	A—Spain
Y—Jamaica	Y—Sri Lanka
A—Japan	Y—Sudan
A—Jordan	Y—Suriname
Y—Kenya	Y—Swaziland
Kuwait	Y—Sweden
Y—Lao P.D.R.	Y—Syrian Arab Republic
A—Lebanon	A—Thailand
Y—Lesotho	Y—Togo
Y—Liberia	Y—Trinidad and Tobago
Y—Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	A—Tunisia
A—Luxembourg	A—Turkey
Y—Madagascar	Y—Uganda
Y—Malawi	Y—Ukranian S.S.R.
A—Malaysia	Y—Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Maldives	A—United Arab Emirates
Y—Mali	A—United Kingdom
Y—Malta	A—United Republic of Cameroon
Y—Mauritania	Y—United Republic of Tanzania
Mauritius	A—United States
Y—Mexico	Y—Upper Volta
Y—Mongolia	A—Uruguay
N—Morocco	Y—Venezuela
Y—Mozambique	Y—Vietnam
Y—Nepal	Y—Yemen
A—Netherlands	Y—Yugoslavia
A—New Zealand	A—Zaire
Y—Nicaragua	Y—Zambia

APPENDIX 7

SMALL INDEPENDENT NATIONS: COUNTRIES WITH POPULATIONS OF LESS THAN 230,000

Country :	Population
Andorra -----	25, 000
Bahamas -----	230, 000
Djibouti -----	225, 000
Dominica -----	78, 000
Grenada -----	110, 000
Iceland -----	227, 000
Liechtenstein -----	22, 850
Maldives -----	145, 000
Monaco -----	30, 000
Nauru -----	8, 000
Qatar -----	200, 000
Saint Lucia -----	101, 000
San Marino -----	20, 500
Sao Tome and Principe -----	85, 500
Seychelles -----	65, 000
Solomon Islands -----	200, 000
Tonga -----	100, 000
Vatican City State -----	1, 000
Western Samoa -----	155, 000

(26)



