

(b) In view of the above it was impossible to operate fighters at all and for this reason, and only this, the enemy had local air superiority.

(c) Because there was no aerodrome in Somaliland from which to work, our bombers were forced to operate from Aden which was a range of 200 miles over sea. At this range the air effort was greatly hampered and it was impossible to keep in close touch with the military situation.

(d) Since the enemy had local air superiority our bombers were continually being attacked by fighter aircraft while the crews were trying to concentrate their attention upon the ground to assist the Army and trying to get a grip of the fast changing military situation. This made our bombers extremely vulnerable.

(e) The aircraft with which we are equipped is a fast medium bomber which is excellent for its proper role but unsuitable for close army co-operation work, especially when not protected by fighters.

Conclusion.

13. In short the air effort expended in support of the Army in Somaliland was the maximum which could be given with the air forces available and with no protected aerodrome from which to work. It proved expensive in aircraft and crews but certain valuable results were obtained.

14. In conclusion the sincere thanks of the R.A.F. at Aden are due to the Military Authorities in Somaliland for their assistance, close co-operation and careful regard to our limitations in the circumstances.

Sgd. G. R. M. REID,
Air Vice Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding,
British Forces in Aden.

NOTE BY FORCE COMMANDER IN REFERENCE TO PARA. 12 (a) OF REPORT BY A.O.C., BRITISH FORCES IN ADEN.

1. In normal circumstances A.A. Bofors guns would have been made available for the defence of aerodromes at Berbera and Laferug. None, however, existed with the force.

2. I would not like an impression to arise that no A.A. defence was provided by the Army at these two aerodromes. Each aerodrome was given ground and low altitude defences by a Platoon of Infantry with two A.A. V.B. guns; whilst at Berbera the A.A. layout of the two 3-inch A.A. guns included protection of the aerodrome as far as was possible, though the primary objective protected was the port area.

3. In actual fact, the platoon protecting the Berbera aerodrome brought down one enemy fighter.

Sgd. A. R. GODWIN-AUSTEN,
Major-General.

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