

**LIBERIA**

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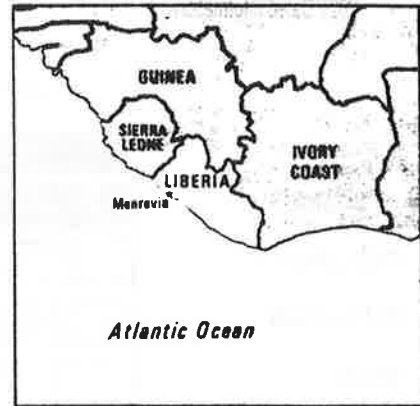
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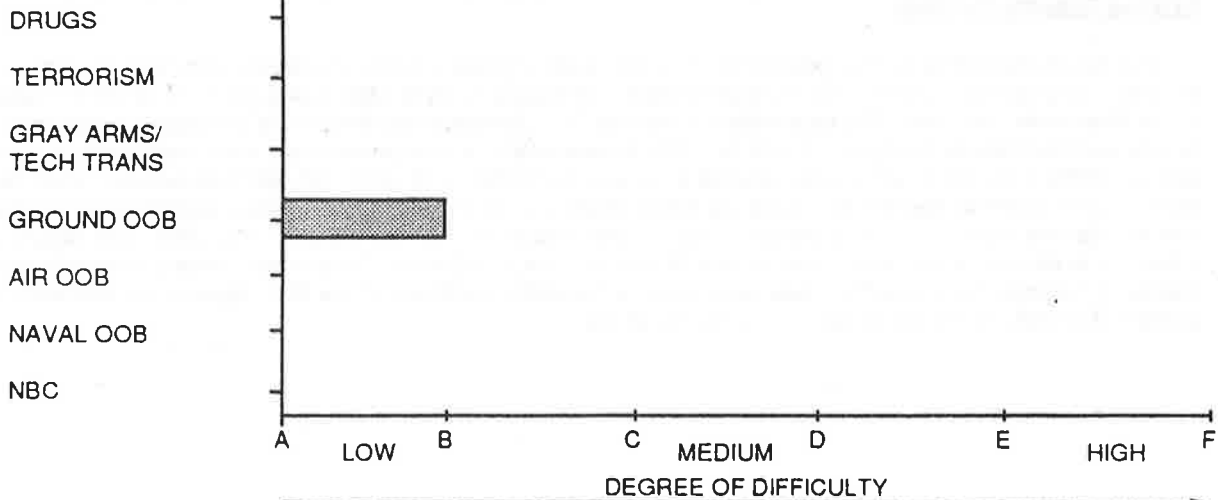


**SUMMARY**

The commitment of **U.S.** Marines to the crisis torn west **African** country of **Liberia** continues on with poor prospects for peace or stability in the foreseeable future. On August 5, 1990, after a long period afloat off the capital city of **Monrovia**, the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) established a security force ashore at the **American** Embassy compound and nearby communications facilities and assisted in the evacuation of 1705 **Americans** and foreign nationals. The 22nd MEU was later relieved by the 26th MEU. President Samuel Doe's death on September 10 and the failure of the five-nation west **African** peacekeeping force to ameliorate the situation has caused chaos and disorder to continue. The civil war shows no promise of quick resolution, with reports of starvation in **Monrovia** and rebel leaders Prince Johnson and Charles Taylor both claiming to be president. **U.S.** equity in **Liberia** is moderate. For many years, the **U.S.** has been **Liberia's** primary trading partner and has provided the country with significant amounts of economic and military assistance. Until recently, up to 4,000 **U.S.** citizens resided in **Liberia**. The country has a small ground OOB, with about 5,300 troops and air and naval OOBs that are practically negligible. Most military equipment and training has been obtained from the **U.S.** The army services are all engaged in fighting the rebel groups in and around **Monrovia**.

The population of **Liberia** includes at least 16 distinct ethnic groups and descendents of emancipated slaves from the **U.S.** Ethnic unrest is a major cause of the present disorder. The culture of **Liberia** is quite different from that of the **U.S.** **Liberia** lies within the tropical rain forest and the climate is hot and humid year-round. The terrain consists of a coastal plain, rising to a rolling plateau and low mountains near the inland borders. The country is generally unsuited for tracked movement due to the dense vegetation and broken terrain. The average standoff distance for engagement by line of sight weapons (intervisibility) is limited to less than 1,000 meters mainly because of the ground cover and frequent heavy rainfall. Coverage by 1:50,000 scale maps is restricted to the coastal area extending from **Monrovia** to **Buchanan**. Airfields and ports are available to receive strategic lift and other key installations include **U.S.** telecommunications facilities. The **Atlantic** ARG with its embarked MEU would require in excess of six days to reach **Liberia**.

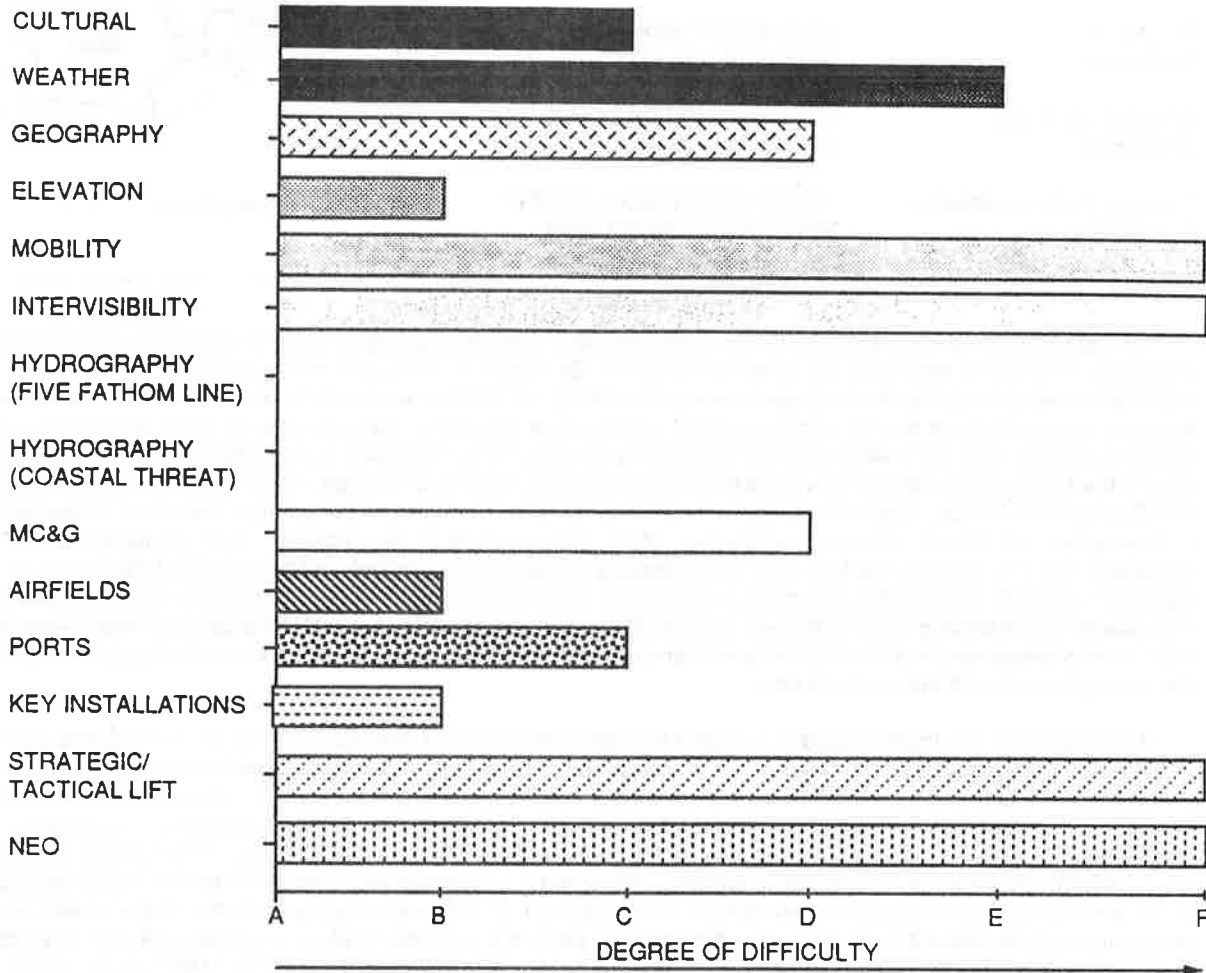
LIBERIA - THREAT SUMMARY



Liberia - 1

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## LIBERIA - TERRAIN AND LOGISTICS SUMMARY



### Existing Ongoing Conflicts

The commitment of U.S. Marines to the crisis-torn west African country of Liberia continues on with poor prospects for peace or stability in the immediate future. On August 5, 1990, after a long period afloat off the capital city of Monrovia, the 22nd MEU established a security force ashore at the American Embassy compound and nearby communications facilities. A total of 1,705 Americans and foreign nationals were evacuated. Later in August MARG 2-90 (22nd MEU) was relieved on station by MARG 3-90 (with 26th MEU embarked). President Samuel Doe's death on September 10 and the failure of the five-nation west African peacekeeping force to protect him has caused the civil war to continue. The situation shows no promise of quick resolution, with reports of starvation in Monrovia and rebel force leaders Prince Johnson and Charles Taylor each claiming to be president. Marine helicopters most recently have been used to transport members of the U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) to the city to assist in humanitarian aid.

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Public Release Approved  
2021 Dated Information

## U.S. Equities in Liberia

- Overall U.S. equity is moderate.

The U.S. has provided substantial and longstanding support through AID, Peace Corps, and military assistance programs in Liberia. Additional U.S. support has come from private business, missionary, and educational organizations. The U.S. for many years has been Liberia's preeminent trading partner. Liberia is the site of important U.S. telecommunications facilities.

Direct Inv (Mil of \$)	Exports (Mil of \$)	Imports (Mil of \$)	U.S. Aid (Mil of \$)	Total Equity (Mil of \$)	U.S. Citizens	\$ Rating		Total Numerical Rating	Overall U.S. Equity
						1	4		
-	70	101	23	194	* 4,000	1	4	5	Medium

\* Reduced considerably due to the civil war.

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## General Ground OOB

Infantry	Tank OOB	Artillery	Army Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
Reg/TR	None	Howitzers	5	1	66	B

Ground OOB consists of 5,300 troops which are primarily volunteers with some conscripts. Training is generally poor. Tanks: none; Artillery: 75 mm pack howitzers, 105 mm.

## General Air OOB

Air OOB	Close Air	AAW (IAD)	Air Force Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
DC-3/Props	None	None	Negligible	1	11	A

Fighter Aircraft: none; Close Air: none; Air Defense: none.

## General Naval OOB

Naval OOB	S/S Missiles	Patrol Craft	Navy Size (Thousands)	Quality	Total Capability Value	Rating
Small Surface	None	Sm Gun Boats	Negligible	1	31	A

Ships: none; SSMs: none; Patrol Craft: 6 Small Coastal Patrol Craft.

## Culture (Language and Religion)

Primary language - English (Tribal)  
Primary religion - Traditional

The population of Liberia includes at least 16 distinct ethnic groups and descendents of emancipated slaves from the U.S. The present civil war is increasingly driven by ethnic hostilities. There is a fairly significant cultural difference between Liberia and the U.S.

Weather

Average Temperature (Degrees Fahrenheit)	Average Relative Humidity (Percent)	Average Annual Rainfall (Inches)	Rating
73-84	81	140	Wet/Hot

Liberia lies within the tropical rain forest belt and has distinct wet and dry seasons. Rainfall occurs mainly between April and November. The climate is generally hot and humid year-round.

General Geographic Conditions

URBAN	DESERT	JUNGLE	MOUNTAINOUS
		X	

Operational Elevation

<2,000 FT	<4,000 FT	<6,000 FT	>6,000 FT	>9,000 FT	>12,000 FT
	X				

Liberia's terrain consists of a coastal plain rising to a rolling plateau, and low mountains near the inland borders.

General Cross-Country Mobility

- Liberia is generally unsuited for cross-country movement of tracked vehicles.

The entire country is generally ill-suited for tracked movement due to lagoons, tidal creeks, and marshes along the coast and broken terrain, rivers, and thick ground cover inland.

Intervisibility (Line of Sight)

- Poor, with line of sight distances normally limited to less than 1,000 meters.

Line of sight distances in Liberia would be substantially less than 1,000 meters due to dense vegetation, low mountains, steep hills, and frequent heavy rainfall.

Hydrography (Five Fathom Line)

- NGF platforms are able to approach the coast to provide satisfactory support for operations ashore.

DMA Chart #	5 Fathom Line from Shore (Meters)	NFG Rating
51641/51642	3,220	Good

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## Hydrography (Coastal Threat)

- Limited coastal threat.

Maximum Capability Coastal Defense Weapon	Maximum Range of Weapon (Meters)	Rating (Compared with 5"/54-cal)
105 mm M-101	11,000	U.S. NGF Advantage

## MC&G Shortfalls

- Limited map coverage.

1:50 New	1:50 Old	Some 1:50	MSI Avail	1:250 New	None
		X			

1:50,000 map coverage exists for the coastal area from **Monrovia** to **Buchanan**,

## Airfields

- Accessible by air, with one airfield that can handle C-5 aircraft.

Number of Airfields	Type Aircraft (C-5, C-141B, C-130) Accommodated	Airfield Utility (Unconstrained/Constrained)	Rating
2	1 C-5 1 C-130	1/1	1/C-5

Airfields	Type Aircraft	Comments
Monrovia/Roberts International Monrovia/Spriggs Payne	C-5, C-141B, C-130 C-130	- Low runway WBC.

## Ports

- Two major ports capable of accommodating strategic sealift.

Major Ports	Harbor Size	Channel/Anchorage Depths (Feet)	Cargo Pier Depth (Feet)	Cranes
Monrovia	Small	36-40/36-40	36-40	Yes
Buchanan	Small	41-45/41-45	41-45	Yes

**Key Installations**

Important **U.S.** telecommunications facilities are located in **Liberia**. Voice of **America** transmitters, which broadcast to the entire **African** Continent, and an Omega navigational station (one of seven such in the world) are situated near **Monrovia**. The 427-meter transmission tower is the tallest structure in **Africa**. There is a hydroelectric dam at **Mount Coffee** near **Monrovia** and a National Medical Center in the city which includes a 271-bed hospital.

U.S. Embassy	Communications	Highways	Railroads	Major Ports	Primary Airfields	Pipeline	Oil Field	NBC
Monrovia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Radio relay network centered at Monrovia</li> <li>- 7 Radio stations</li> <li>- 5 TV stations</li> <li>- 1 Satellite station</li> </ul>	7,764 km	480 km	2	2	None	None	None

**Strategic and Tactical Lift**

The **Atlantic ARG** with its embarked **MEU** which normally operates in the **Mediterranean Sea** would require in excess of six days to reach **Liberia**. The **AAF/ACB** can arrive within 24 hours but these elements do not possess a forcible entry capability.

**NEO**

- Due to the large number of potential evacuees (4,000) in **Liberia**, **NEO** conducted by a **MEU** under normal conditions would present numerous difficulties. (A total of 1,705 were recently evacuated successfully.)

Embassy Staff	Evacuees	Inland Objective (nm)	Rating
136	4,000	2 (Monrovia)	F

Note: In **Liberia**, the following factors are of little significance:

- Drugs
- Terrorism
- Gray Arms/Technology Transfer
- OOB (Air, Naval)
- NBC

