

To: Director, Humanitarian Information Unit
From: Alexis Q. Student

Subject: Potential Conflict in Western Peninsula

Overview:

Since the independence of Pumpkinia as a result of the Cucumberlandian civil war, relations between the two states have been counterproductive. Pumpkinia prohibits trade with Cucumberland as a statement against the mistreatment of the ethnic Pumpkinese who work in Cucumberland's gold mines, while also covertly supporting a Pumpkinese rebel movement in western Cucumberland. To counter Pumpkinia's support of rebels, Cucumberland provides safe haven and financing to the Tomato Liberation Front (TLF), which has repeatedly launched cross-border attacks against military and civilian targets inside Pumpkinia. Cucumberland also refuses to engage in dialogue with international negotiators over the status of its Pumpkinese minority.

Conflict Scenario:

Approximately 10 percent of Cucumberland's population is ethnic Pumpkinese. This group of approximately 4 million people is denied the legal protections granted to other citizens of the country and also lives under harsh economic conditions (U.N. Vegetable Rights Commission, 37). Continued violations of the human rights of ethnic Pumpkinese in Cucumberland will likely result in an upsurge in rebel activity within the country's northwestern provinces. If rebels demonstrate increased effectiveness against Cucumberland's central government, Pumpkinia will increase its support of the rebellion in the hopes of gaining control over territory that contains extremely valuable gold deposits.

The plight of Pumpkinese in Cucumberland, as well as recent attacks by the TLF, have strengthened the position of ultranationalist Pumpkinese political figures (Freedom Watch, 62). Should a TLF attack cause major loss of life during the next round of national elections, the winning candidates will likely push for a military response against TLF bases within Cucumberland. A military incursion into Cucumberland would also serve to strengthen the position of Pumpkinese rebels inside Cucumberland.

Given the lack of trade between the two countries since Pumpkinia's independence, neither one can affect the behavior of the other with economic sanctions. Pumpkinia and Cucumberland have vastly improved their military capabilities by purchasing large quantities of arms from South Eggplant and the United Potato States, respectively, and each government increasingly sees military conflict as the only possible solution to its problems with its neighbor.

Recommendation:

The USA should use diplomatic pressure and economic incentives to persuade Cucumberland to end its support of the Tomato Liberation Front as a first step toward improvement in its relations with Pumpkinia.