



READ THE DOCUMENT “DRUM TROOPS LEARN ABOUT SOMALIS”...THEN ANSWER THE PROVIDED QUESTIONS.

1. WHAT YEAR WAS THIS DOCUMENT WRITTEN? _____
WERE ARE THE TROOPS GOING TO SOMALIA FROM? _____

2. WHERE IS SOMALIA? _____
WHAT IS CORNUCOPIA? (USE A DICTIONARY) _____

HOW DOES CORNUCOPIA RELATE TO SOMALIA? _____

3. WHAT RELIGION DO MOST OF THE SOMALIA PEOPLE PRACTICE? _____

4. WHAT ARE THE COLLEGE PROFESSORS TEACHING THE SOLDIERS? _____
WHY ARE THEY TEACHING THEM? _____

5. HOW DO THE SOMALIA PEOPLE FEEL ABOUT DOGS? _____

6. DEFINE CONSENSUS (USE A DICTIONARY) _____

HOW DOES THIS FIT WITH THE WAY SOMALIS TAKE ORDERS? _____

7. WHAT IS A NOMAD? _____
WHY DO THEY USE THE TYPE OF PILLOWS TO SLEEP THAT THEY DO? _____

8. LIST 3 THINGS THAT U.S. SOLDIERS SHOULD NOT DO.

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

9. WHAT IS MOGADISHU? _____

10. WHAT WERE THE SOLDIERS TOLD TO EXPECT FROM THE CHILDREN? _____

Soldiers with the 10th Mountain Division listen at Fort Drum Tuesday during a briefing on cultural differences and traditions. P.S. 12/16/92

Drum Troops Learn about Somalis

■ SUNY Albany professors who spent up to two years in Somalia talk about cultural differences.

By BARBARA STITH
The Post-Standard

FORT DRUM — The Somali people are different from the American soldiers on their way to help the starving nation.

They dislike dogs and believe they must wash seven times to cleanse themselves if they are licked by one. Polygamy is common. Five times a day, they stop whatever they are doing to pray.

When an officer yells an order, a soldier jumps to obey — but officers and orders are foreign to Somalia, who view a demand as the opening round in protracted negotiations over the simplest request.

A group of State University of New York at Albany professors who spent time in Somalia clued in soldiers with the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum Tuesday about the cultural differences they will encounter on their mission.

But they brought a broader message to the troops: that the Somalis they came to care about during an educational exchange in the late 1980s are dignified, intelligent and inheritors of a rich tradition.

"Deep in their heart they are no different from us," said one of the professors, Pong Lee.

Sue Faerman, an assistant professor in the public administration and policy department at SUNY Albany, came up with the idea to brief the troops after watching inter-

views with soldiers and their families on television.

"For them Mogadishu might as well have been Mars," she said.

Eleven of the 18 SUNY Albany professors, who spent up to two years in Somalia are visiting the Army post this week. They said at Tuesday's briefing that, even in the best of times, Somalia is an incredibly poor nation — so deprived, Faerman said, that the poorest areas of the United States look wealthy by comparison.

Another professor, Margaret Nelson, showed the soldiers what passes for a pillow in Somalia: a small wooden stand with a narrow arc at the top. Nomads rest their neck on the headrest to keep their heads a few inches above the ground, away from the snakes.

Nelson gave the soldiers a list of do's and don'ts: Don't take photographs, because the Somalis believe that, if their image is captured, their soul will be captured. Don't be offended by men walking hand in hand — it's an expression of friendship. Don't shake hands or touch anyone with the left hand.

The biggest taboo, she said, is fraternizing with women, particularly in the countryside.

"Don't mess with the Somali women," Nelson said. To do so, she said, would be a tremendous cultural violation that would result in the women being ostracized.

Faerman, who left Somalia in 1990 just before its government collapsed, told the soldiers to expect to be followed everywhere by children who will beg for shillings.

Faerman said it was difficult for her to leave the Somali children be-

hind — harder still to know what has happened to them since.

"I do a lot of crying when I watch TV," she said.

The professors said they wanted to come to Fort Drum not only to help the soldiers learn about Somalia but to thank them for going to that nation's aid.

The briefing in the packed 850-seat Mohawk Theater momentarily turned into a pep rally when professor W. Christian Buss told the soldiers they were at a turning point in military history: "going to express the love of another people, not the hate of another people."

He told the soldiers to "climb to glory" — the motto of the 10th Mountain Division — to the cheers of the troops.