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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. 0202

WASHINGTON

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INFORMATION

March 20, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER *HK*

SUBJECT: Haile Selassie Deeply Disturbed by Cut  
in Military Assistance for Ethiopia

Haile Selassie called Ambassador Ross Adair in yesterday to discuss the cut in our 1972 military assistance for Ethiopia. The Emperor made it very plain that he is deeply distressed by the cut, and several times referred to his conviction that a meeting with you was desirable to discuss MAP levels and long-term relations between the United States and Ethiopia.

One of the effects of the Congressional reduction of MAP funds has been the decision to cut the FY 1972 military assistance program for Ethiopia from \$12.5 to \$9 million (a 28% cut). This decision was conveyed to the Ethiopian Foreign Minister a few days ago and, as expected, Emperor Haile Selassie's reaction was very strong and very quick. Ross Adair says the Emperor spoke "in stronger terms than we can recall", that the conversation was friendly but the "most serious I have ever had with him". The Emperor said the cut came "as a great blow to him" and would raise many doubts both in Ethiopia and in other countries, friend and foe alike, as to whether the US was readjusting and reducing its interest in Ethiopia and the Red Sea/Indian Ocean part of the world.

Selassie said he had felt for some time, and let it be known, that it was desirable that he meet with you for a discussion of levels of US assistance to Ethiopia. He said that the MAP cut was of "the utmost importance" to him and brought into question the future of the long-term friendship between our countries. He expressly asked Ross Adair to convey his deep concerns to you.

Adair replied by stressing your friendship and respect for the Emperor, but pointed out that the pressures on you this year had already caused you to forego conferences with several other world leaders. Adair also pointed out that the cuts were the result of Congressional action, and

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that Ethiopia still received 70% of total US military assistance for Africa. The Emperor's reply was that he knew all that, but thought Ethiopia was entitled to special consideration.

Haile Selassie has repeatedly used a personal visit to Washington as a device by which to increase or maintain assistance for Ethiopia. It is clear that he hopes to do so again. As of now, he has not asked for a meeting, but has made it plain that he wants an invitation. At the very least we are probably going to need to send a personal message from you to the Emperor regarding the military assistance program and the future of US policy toward Ethiopia. We are now looking into the possibility of a modest restoration of part of the cut in MAP for Ethiopia but, of course, this must come out of someone else's hide and the hides of all our friends have been badly gored. A personal message from you and a modest increase may deflect the Emperor from treating a visit to Washington as a symbol of your continued interest in Ethiopia.

The Emperor promised Adair a formal communication on the MAP level within the next few days. We will hold off making specific recommendations to you pending receipt of that document.

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