

SECRETARY'S STAFF MEETING

Monday, December 23, 1974

PRESENT:

The Secretary of State - HENRY A. KISSINGER

MR. SISCO
MR. ROBINSON
MR. ALDRICH
MR. MAW
AMBASSADOR BROWN
MR. EASUM
MR. ROGERS
MR. HABIB
MR. STABLER
MR. ATHERTON
MR. HYLAND
MR. LORD
MR. ENDERS
MR. ANDERSON
AMBASSADOR MCCLOSKEY
MR. VEST
AMBASSADOR BUFFUM
GOVERNOR HOLTON
MR. SPRINGSTEEN

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E.O. 12958, as amended
May 4, 2006

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By MC NARA Date 5/2

[Omitted here are portions of the discussion unrelated to Africa.]

MR. EASUM: A couple of military questions that are disturbing us. Kenya has asked us for military assistance. They say they need a squadron of F-5-Es, and police helicopters and small arms. Their concern is Somalia.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Why is that disturbing to us?

MR. EASUM: Well, because we don't have any way of being responsive to them.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I think we better get the aid ceiling lifted on Africa.

MR. EASUM: George and I will talk about this.

MR. VEST: We will still have a problem of money, because we don't have the money, even if you lift the ceiling -- unless they are going to buy for cash.

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MR. EASUM: No, they say they want it on grant or credit.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Look, a great country that cannot give military aid in these revolutionary situations is going to become irrelevant.

MR. EASUM: This is not a revolutionary situation.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Africa is a revolutionary situation.

MR. EASUM: Yes, the whole place. This is a case of fear of a neighbor, as is the case of Ethiopia.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: So we will become irrelevant.

MR. EASUM: A neighbor that may or may not have the intention -

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That is totally irrelevant. For the United States, sitting 5,000 miles away, to give lectures -- if Kenya and Ethiopia fear Somalia, there must be some reason for it. And even if it all in their minds, it is still a factor of their politics. What are we answering?

MR. EASUM: We are not answering yet, because we don't know what to say. But we are surely not lecturing to them, either. We just received this request this weekend.

The other one is troublesome because -

SECRETARY KISSINGER: George, can you look at what we could do if we wanted to do something and --

MR. VEST: Yes.

MR. EASUM: The other case is a completely different kind of case. the Malians have attacked the Voltans, arugging over --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The who?

MR. EASUM: The Upper Voltans. The Malians on their north have attacked the Upper Voltans, in the upper part of Upper Volta.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Militarily?

MR. EASUM: Militarily. This is a ridiculous assertion, in our view, by the Malians. They are going back to a period of twenty years in this century, when they did have this particular area. They haven't had it since 1947. It is against OAU resolutions.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Do we have to take a stand on that monumental issue?

MR. EASUM: Well, I have to say no to the Voltan Ambassador, when he comes in today and asks me for arms.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: What does he want?

MR. EASUM: Anything. They can use tennis shoes,

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uniforms, food, small arms.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I am assuming the bureau has an ideological objection to giving arms to Africa.

MR. EASUM: No, sir. We want to look at this, though. It is again a case of not having the funds.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: There are two problems. One is I have no interest whatever in the Mali-Upper Volta dispute. It is not an American problem. I don't think it is good for the United States to be in a position where on the issues that most concern some African countries, we either tell them they have no problem or we say we cannot do anything. But I don't know what we can do with Upper Volta. Nor do I know whether in the middle of a military situation we should get involved. Are they going to other countries, too?

MR. EASUM: No.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: How are they going to pay --

MR. EASUM: You mean for arms? They will go everywhere they can.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: How are they going to pay for it?

MR. EASUM: They have nothing to pay for it. These are the areas most hit by drought.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: Where did Mali get its arms from?

MR. EASUM: They have had some for a long time from the Soviets. Earlier than that from the French. They are infinitely better armed than the Voltans are. They have also been in dire need of our economic assistance, and although one wouldn't lecture to them, one might suggest they are prejudicing a continuation of this kind of aid --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Who -- the Voltans?

MR. EASUM: No -- the Malians. --- by attack on the Voltans, which appears to be completely unreasonable and unprovoked.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: How much have they taken?

MR. EASUM: They are skirmishing across the border. Can't say yet they have taken anything as such.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Let's give it a day and see what happens.

MR. HABIB: Are they taking it to the UN?

MR. EASUM: Not yet.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Let's let it go a day, shall we?

[Omitted here are portions of the discussion unrelated to Africa.]