

DECLASSIFIED

PA/HO Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

April 21, 2005

25355



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

71001132

January 25, 1971

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Military Coup in Uganda

Uganda's President, A. Milton Obote, on his way back from the Singapore Commonwealth Conference, appears to have been overthrown today by a military coup d'etat. Fighting broke out in Kampala and Jinja in the early hours of January 25. Around 3:15 p.m. Radio Uganda broadcast a statement that a military coalition headed by Major General Idi Amin, Chief of the Defense Staff, and backed by the Commander of the Police, had taken over the government.

It is not clear how solid Amin's position is. Although the fighting subsided this afternoon, it has reportedly resumed tonight, presumably between Amin's forces and those still loyal to the President. Obote landed at Nairobi several hours ago and is said to be consulting with Kenya's leaders.

There have been no reports of injuries involving Americans or other foreigners.

Statements by military spokesmen have attacked Obote for favoring his own Langi tribe and accused him and his followers of getting rich at the expense of the "common man" while preaching socialism. While the southern Bantu, particularly the Baganda (who have long opposed Obote) do not seem to have been directly involved, they are for the moment at least probably sympathetic with the announced aims of the coup leaders despite an aversion to military rule. These goals include the release of political detainees and an early return to civilian government with free elections.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Group 3

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified.

DECLASSIFIED

PA/HO Department of State

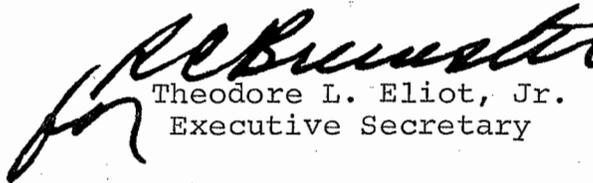
E.O. 12958, as amended

April 21, 2005

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

2

The military government has called upon ministers and civil servants to return to work, but we do not at the moment know of the whereabouts of most members of Obote's Government or whether all the ministers would be acceptable to the new regime. The statements of the new leaders suggest they would seek a government of national unity that might be more conservative than Obote's both in national and international issues.



Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.
Executive Secretary

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~