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In Attendance

Secretary of State Kissinger

P Mr. Sisco
M Mr. Brown
EA Mr. Ingersoll
EUR Mr. Hartman
L Mr. Maw
S/AM Mr. McCloskey
AF Mr. Easum
INR Mr. Hyland
NEA Mr. Atherton
ARA Mr. Bowdler
EB Mr. Enders
S/P Mr. Lord
S/PRS Mr. Anderson
S Mr. Campbell
S/S Mr. Springsteen

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PA/HO Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
May 4, 2006

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

SECRETARY KISSINGER: O.K. Ethiopia.

MR. EASUM: Yes; Ethiopia.

The Ambassador has just come back here from talking with the Emperor and the Government -- if it can be called that -- in Addis -- and tells us that there is now irrefutable proof that Somalia is planning an invasion of the eastern part of Ethiopia. But the only question in the Somali minds is when they're going to do it. We have no -- based on a quick check we made an hour ago -- no indication that ~~this~~ is, indeed, the fact.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But what indication would we

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have? Do we do serious intelligence there?

MR. EASUM: Yes. Surely, we have intelligence sources on what's happening in Somali.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Did you check with the Agency?

MR. EASUM: Yes, sir.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Bill, what do you think?

MR. HYLAND: I have no idea whether we have good intelligence.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Do you want to let me know by tomorrow?

MR. HYLAND: Yes, sir.

MR. EASUM: It's generally assumed that at some point in time the Somalis might make this kind of an effort -- but not so quickly.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: They seemed to prove they didn't have the capability to make that effort.

MR. EASUM: That's one of the problems.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I thought a few weeks ago the argument was whether we should increase military aid to Ethiopia. Don't you remember that?

MR. EASUM: Yes. But that's part of the point. The Ethiopians have now come to us and argued for massive

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military assistance on the basis of a preponderance of military force in the hands of the Somalis.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But that ought to be determinable.

MR. EASUM: That ought to be determinable. We have the figures, but it's hard to know how to accommodate those figures. The tanks are far superior on the Somali side; the mortars are far more on the Ethiopian side. It's tough to make this --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, Bill, you better give me an estimate before the end of the day tomorrow.

MR. HYLAND: The capabilities, or whether we'll know in advance?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: One, an assessment of capabilities -- and, secondly, how much advance information we're going to have in terms of our capabilities. I mean you can't do it the way you're doing it -- more airplanes but older.

MR. EASUM: No.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: It depends how much older, and it depends how many more tanks and what types.

Can we get it broken down, Bill?

MR. HYLAND: Yes, sir.

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MR. EASUM: Now, the Ethiopians are in town now with a middle-level military delegation and are urgently seeking assistance to the tune of 150 million dollars. They've talked with Defense people. The Ambassador came in and talked with me today. And they've talked to others -- with Mr. Rush.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But what's your attitude?

MR. EASUM: We don't know for sure.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well then, what are you talking about if you don't know what your attitude is?

MR. EASUM: The Defense Department believes that perhaps any increased input of 25 million dollars would be reasonable. But we're not yet clear.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes. But on the basis of what are we going to come to a conclusion? If you're not clear today, when are you going to be clear?

MR. EASUM: We're just going to have to keep studying it and try to figure out, as best we can, what the intentions are on both sides.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes. But on the basis of what are you making your judgment? Once you determine your intentions it may be too late to do something about them.

MR. EASUM: The problem that I think faces us is that

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the problems in Ethiopia are of such vast extent -- they're economic and they're social -- and we're being asked to provide a military response.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes. But if the military are going to run the country, that's where you've got to start.

MR. EASUM: We are not clear that they are running it. It's one of the problems.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I would look at the military aid -- I don't know whether we ought to give it. This is the first time I hear of it. I would look at it in terms of whether the country has political stability and not look at it in terms of whether we have 25 million dollars to spend -- because if the government is going to become radical, it's certainly going to cost us more than 25 million dollars for surrounding countries.

Could we get a State Department view on the subject?

MR. EASUM: We're working on it right now, and the WSAG meeting will be held on Wednesday at three.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: When?

MR. EASUM: At 3 o'clock.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, I thought we made a

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mistake getting out of that base at the time. Now,
I don't know -- what was it? Catina?

MR. BROWN: Kagnew.

MR. EASUM: Kagnew.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I didn't think we examined
the political aspect of it at the time in terms of
its impact on the Government. I don't believe that these
difficulties had anything to do with that. But, at any rate,
I believe we ought to look at the military aid from the
point of view of its contribution from the political --
to getting a political structure established -- in addition
to looking at it from the point of view of this Somali-Ethiopian
situation.

What is your view? What is the problem politically?

MR. EASUM: Well, the problem is: You don't have
a government that's going to last. You have a government
that has perhaps a six-month life on it; it's been given that
much time to come up with solutions. The military --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But what are they?

MR. EASUM: The military are rent asunder. It is
very hard to know who is running the country at this time.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes. But they sure as hell
aren't going to solve the political and social problems of

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Ethiopia in six months. So the problem is, assuming this is a group we want to work with -- which I can't judge -- we want to do our best to keep them in office. I've never heard of any of their names, but I would think that even if they engage in an active program of social reform that in six months they aren't going to have achieved anything.

MR. BROWN: It's not possible, no.

MR. EASUM: The country is, in a way, in a state of ~~anarchy~~ ^{anarchy} in terms of the demands that are being put on the present government. The taxi drivers are on strike, the students. There are demands for land reform, and this is the problem of this present caretaker regime, which probably will not last.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes. But is it in our interest for it to last? I don't know the answer to that question.

MR. EASUM: Well, I don't think anything we can do would permit it to last. So if we make an additional military commitment now of military assistance, the question is: Is it, in the first instance, capable of staving off a military dispute between the two countries?

We're not sure, but we hesitate to make that kind

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commitment this early in time.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes, but when would you make it? What are the facts you're looking for to really make a commitment?

MR. EASUM: Well, one thing we'd be looking for would be some kind of regime that we think would stay in office; and it would not be a regime operating in the service to our ^{ADVANTAGE}, and we're not sure that we have that yet. This is a caretaker regime which is moving toward a kind of constitutional monarchy. And until we see how this moves over the coming six months, we would hesitate to make this kind of commitment of military assistance -- of increased military assistance. We already have 5 million dollars a year in foreign military assistance.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Of course, the interesting question is: Supposing if we can suddenly find 25 million -- supposing we had put that in the budget earlier this year -- would ^{it} that have staved us off?

MR. EASUM: I would doubt it. That's a hard question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But it might have.

MR. EASUM: Well, our concern is that it's not a military problem that we think we face.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: I'm sure it's not a military problem in the long term. The question is how much is it in the short term?

MR. EASUM: Here we do not have intelligence estimates --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: And what does that government think its problem is?

MR. EASUM: That government?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Yes.

MR. EASUM: I think it's a problem of aggression from Somali.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Therefore, if it doesn't get help, it will compound its demoralization; and, therefore, it's more likely to fall.

MR. EASUM: But it may fall anyway, and it may not be the kind of regime --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But what have we lost if we have given them something of American military aid and it falls anyway?

MR. EASUM: Well, we've used military aid that we don't have, for one thing. We'd have to find it someplace. Secondly --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Cambodia -- I don't know

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what we'd do without Cambodia.

MR. EASUM: We run the risk that the Somalis will up the levels of their request, so that you have a race to keep equal -- or you could have the Somali --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, that's not argument to go one round to see whether in fact that would happen.

Another thing that could happen is that the Somalis would be discouraged from that happening.

MR. EASUM: Or they could argue: "Let's have that happen quickly."

SECRETARY KISSINGER: O.K. Well, there will be a WSAG meeting, so we'll at least have some view on it.

Good. We'll make a decision by the end of this week.

MR. BROWN: O.K. Couldn't we think of this another way though? I mean, isn't there an element in Ethiopia that we can support? We're putting our hands up saying, "There's nothing we can do about it." But, as far as I remember, I think we've trained several thousand Ethiopians in the United States when we had a military program of one kind or another. Instead of trying to do it through military arms, which won't be delivered until 36 months, can't we do

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something through the CIA for these military groups and put it in through some of the younger officers and hold this place together?

I mean, seriously, we're always being negative.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Can we get some idea before the WSAG meeting what it is we should try to do rather than just wait development?

MR. EASUM: Yes.

MR. BROWN: 2 million dollars in cash is much better than 25 million in arms which won't be delivered until 36 months.

MR. EASUM: Well, we have a 5 million dollar program now in drought --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But that won't make much contribution in political --

MR. EASUM: The problem is we're having a hard time identifying the young military and knowing what their identification is.

MR. BROWN: Every time we have the same argument from Defense -- they can't identify anybody. And we put millions of dollars for training in Ethiopia and Liberia. There's something wrong with our system here if we can't identify with any of this.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: Just let's make sure that we're going to identify the political interests of the United States. The social reform is not the primary purpose of our foreign policy unless it supports our foreign policy.

MR. EASUM: I'm not sure we're clear from the Defense Department what our defensive interests are and what our security interests are.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Well, we certainly don't want another Uganda there if we can avoid it.

O.K. Well, we'll have a chance to discuss it at the WSAG, but we need the clear position of our view by then.

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

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