

SENIOR REVIEW GROUP MEETING

July 25, 1973

Time and Place: 3:17 p.m. - 4:02 p.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: The Horn of Africa (NSSM 184)

Participants:

Chairman	Henry A. Kissinger	CIA	Lt./Gen. Vernon Walters William Parmenter Samuel Hoskinson
State	Kenneth Rush William Porter David Newsom	NSC	Lawrence Eagleburger Harold Horan Jeanne Davis James Barnum
Defense	William Clements James H. Noyes		
JCS	V/Adm. John P. Weinel		

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

It was agreed that an interagency paper would be prepared which would consider:

.... ways to give higher priority to Ethiopian needs in various fields, and

.... what efforts to make connections between Ethiopia and other countries in the area might mean operationally.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Walters) Can we get a briefing?

Mr. Clements: (to Mr. Kissinger) We're ready to present you with an agreed position on Kagnev. We want to get out, and State has now agreed.

Mr. Kissinger: We don't! We're in good shape!

Mr. Rush: I testified this morning before the Muskie Committee on the question of troop withdrawals, following Senator Mansfield. Mansfield's goal is to reduce US forces 50% over a three-year period. In answer to the friendliest kinds of questions from his colleagues, he cited Kagnev as the perfect case of a boondoggle brought about by interservice rivalry. He claimed the Army doesn't want to leave Kagnev, and the Navy wants Diego Garcia. He said that, as a matter of principle, no American boy should be stationed overseas.

Mr. Kissinger: And why do you conclude from this that we have to close Kagnev? We know what Mansfield is after; he's been telling us for years.

Mr. Rush: Mansfield has nothing to do with Kagnev.

Mr. Clements: Right. We have been seeking State's concurrence in shutting down Kagnev in an orderly fashion. We have it, and now we need your concurrence. The question is how the Emperor and the military services in Ethiopia feel. Both Ken (Rush) and I talked to the Emperor when he was here, and he made it plain he had no hard feelings on the matter.

Mr. Kissinger: What will be the strategic effect of our pulling out of the area while the Russians are going in?

Mr. Clements: We're not getting out.

Mr. Kissinger: You want to get out of Kagnev--what are we not getting out of?

Mr. Clements: We want to reallocate our money for some better use in Ethiopia.

Mr. Kissinger: Like what?

Mr. Rush: Military assistance.

Mr. Clements: Training.

Mr. Rush: We won't strengthen our position in Ethiopia by making Kagnev a cause celebre on the floor of the Senate.

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Mr. Kissinger: We will have a cause celebre anyway.

Mr. Rush: We will have a hard time selling Kagnev when we are closing bases in Rhode Island.

Mr. Kissinger: There's no Emperor in Rhode Island.

Mr. Clements: There's Senator Pastore.

Mr. Rush: And you have one in Massachusetts. When we have a base that's not needed and we try to hang on to it, it's just not right.

Mr. Clements: I agree.

Adm. Weinel: Senator Mansfield is wrong about service conflict. The Army has turned the base over to the Navy and they're delighted to get out.

Mr. Kissinger: Everyone is running scared.

Mr. Clements: We just think we can spend our money better.

Mr. Kissinger: Apparently we're going to have the briefing after the meeting. This is a new wrinkle. (to Gen. Walters) Could we have your briefing now?

General Walters briefed from the attached text.

Mr. Kissinger: (Referring to a comment in the briefing about the succession) How would that happen short of the Emperor's dying?

Gen. Walter: It would normally be the Crown Prince, but there is no primogeniture. He could designate another member of the Royal Family.

Mr. Newsom: The Emperor now says the Crown Prince may recover (from the stroke he suffered last January).

Mr. Kissinger: What if he has made no choice?

Gen. Walters: Someone will make it for him. He may have left a letter or a will.

Mr. Rush: Could a will be enforced?

Gen. Walters: Probably not. There are all kinds of possibilities.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Gen. Walters, referring to a comment in the briefing about a possible meeting ^{between} the Emperor and King Faisal) That's a conversation I wish you could bug for us. I'd like a psychological study of those two.

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Gen. Walters: Each is convinced he is of divine origin.

Mr. Kissinger: Is this briefing your own personal assessment or that of your colleagues?

Gen. Walters: It's mine. I had time to review it this time, and I changed it. I have one other concern. If we clear out of Kagnev and don't give Ethiopia the military assistance it wants, how will they interpret it?

Mr. Kissinger: There's no question how it will be interpreted. Our justification for MAP for Ethiopia was the presence of Kagnev. How can we justify it in the absence of Kagnev?

Mr. Rush: That was only part of the justification.

Mr. Newsom: We have important interests in Ethiopia as such.

Mr. Kissinger: The problem is that the people who are claiming that Kagnev is a boondoggle, will claim that we should be doing economic development in Ethiopia--not get involved in military assistance. You won't mollify Mansfield by closing Kagnev.

Mr. Rush: But it would remove a pressure point. It would be easier to deal with Ethiopia on its merits.

Mr. Clements: We're vulnerable to Mansfield or anyone else in the Senate or the House who wants to take a pot-shot at us. We can't close-hold the DOD recommendation that we close it.

Mr. Kissinger: I have no doubt that it won't be closely held. But why did Defense recommend we close it?

Mr. Clements: We want to redirect our assets into training and hardware.

Mr. Kissinger: (to Mr. Newsom) What do you think?

Mr. Newsom: We can only pull out of Kagnev and preserve our interests there if we can justify continued support for the Ethiopian military. The Emperor doesn't care if we leave; in some ways, he would be happy. But he does care increasingly about our support for his military establishment. Can we actually talk about shifting our resources? We can't easily take \$12 million out of support funds and use it for training.

Mr. Clements: I wasn't speaking literally.

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Mr. Rush: We're in the position that we are paying MAP to keep open a useless facility. That will jeopardize MAP.

Mr. Kissinger: Why "useless"? Why did you make that unilateral decision? Why should we visibly weaken our presence in the area when the Soviets are moving in? We could agree to make heroic statements about what we would do for Ethiopia in other areas, but what if a month later it turned out we could do nothing? These are political concerns.

Mr. Clements: My understanding was that this had been thoroughly discussed. That we could move to Diego Garcia and Kagnev could be shut down; that this was a technical communications problem. I inherited a huge file on this and I thought we were ready to march forward.

Mr. Kissinger: I know who's interested in Diego Garcia and how this worked. But we can't help paying a helluva political price in the process. That's what we want examined.

Mr. Rush: There is no question that it was not examined. We have all been in this for a long time.

Mr. Kissinger: But now you have accelerated the time-table.

Mr. Rush: No, we want to close it in 1974.

Mr. Kissinger: But that might be wrong. We have more interests in Ethiopia than just Kagnev. We have been discussing whether we should consider this from a regional point of view. The Russians are moving in the area and Ethiopia might be a counterweight to Soviet influence. What can the US do to counter the picture that we are retreating and the enemy is advancing everywhere?

Mr. Rush: I agree with that.

Mr. Kissinger: If we could shift to increased MAP, okay, but that might be difficult.

Gen. Walters: The Emperor didn't ask us to keep Kagnev open. He asked for \$450 million in military equipment.

Mr. Kissinger: This isn't my first month here. Someone makes a presentation to the Emperor, he mumbles something, and there is a report that the Emperor is pleased. Of course they'll put the best face on it. I don't know the Emperor; I found him a bore and I avoid him. Do we know what he really thinks?

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Mr. Rush: He doesn't give a damn about Kagnew. He wants as much support as possible.

Mr. Kissinger: Will he get it? (to Mr. Newsom) What do you think?

Mr. Newsom: He wants as much support for Ethiopia as he can get as long as he lives. He is now 81.

Mr. Kissinger: Hardly a good base for any long-range prospects.

Mr. Newsom: It's selling us short to say that the future depends on the Emperor. It really depends on the Amharic-Tegrean oligarchy.

Mr. Kissinger: What do we have to do to make Ethiopia a real force vis-a-vis Somalia?

Mr. Newsom: The key is the military. They will take over.

Mr. Kissinger: What should we do for the military?

Mr. Newsom: If we want to maintain any presence there, in the light of the real Congressional problems we have, we have to keep Ethiopia as one of the countries which are authorized grant military assistance.

Mr. Kissinger: But they asked for \$450 million and we are thinking of \$12 million.

Mr. Porter: He'll take whatever he can get.

Mr. Kissinger: I don't know enough about Ethiopia to be convincing. How do their military forces look?

Mr. Clements: They have 40,000 men in the army, reasonably well-trained and fairly viable.

Mr. Kissinger: How do they compare with the Somalis?

Mr. Clements: They're better.

Gen. Walters: The Masai can whip either of them.

Mr. Porter: The Ethiopian Army is the best in the area. The Amharics have been a war-like race for centuries. The Army is the key.

Mr. Newsom: We have maintained MAP for Ethiopia at the \$12 million level.

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We can do what we have to do at that level even if we have to convert some equipment to credit sales.

Mr. Clements: I'd like to look on that level as the minimum. We shouldn't anticipate credit sales. Their economy won't support sales.

Mr. Kissinger: Would it be possible to get the MAP program first, then close Kagnev?

Mr. Porter: You mean hold it open beyond 1974?

Mr. Kissinger: Hold it open until we are sure of MAP.

Mr. Rush: We won't close Kagnev until the end of FY 1974.

Mr. Kissinger: But if it is announced....

Mr. Rush: We won't announce it.

Mr. Kissinger: Why not hold Kagnev until 1975?

Mr. Rush: We have a better chance of getting MAP if we announce that we are closing Kagnev than if we don't announce it. It is an infected pimple in the eyes of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Mr. Kissinger: But they are ^{not} placatable. We haven't lost when we have held firm.

Mr. Rush: But we're having a helluva lot of trouble now on the State Department authorization bill. If we don't close Kagnev, we will be focussing attention on Ethiopia. The more attention they attract, the less we can do for them.

Mr. Noyes: Publicity would limit what we could do.

Mr. Rush: If we're forced out of Ethiopia/ ^{by the Congress,} that won't strengthen us in developing a strategy for the area.

Mr. Kissinger: The proposed MAP program is being considered in the context that we have already given up Kagnev. Mansfield wants us out of all involvement.

Mr. Rush: The MAP program is before the Congress now. They are holding up the State appropriation bill to see if they want to add any amendments to it on the base question. We won't announce the Kagnev closing before the bills are through.

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Mr. Kissinger: When will the announcement emerge from the Pentagon?

Mr. Rush: The minute you approve it.

Mr. Newsom: The Baltimore Sun already has the full story.

Mr. Kissinger: It will emerge whether I approve it or not.

Mr. Clements: This is an extremely sore tooth. We need to help in Ethiopia more than \$11-12 million worth. We need some more for training, small arms, hardware to enhance that 40,000-man force. A solid case can be made for MAP for Ethiopia.

Mr. Kissinger: How about a few tactical nuclear weapons?

Mr. Rush: Kagnew costs us \$12 million a year. We're spending \$12 million a year and not achieving anything in Ethiopia.

Mr. Kissinger: But withdrawal of our presence there may do us damage regardless of what the bases do.

Gen. Walters: They carry on some other activities besides communications.

Mr. Newsom: We have some other activities in Asmara--about 50 people there.

Mr. Kissinger: When foreign governments watch our performance in general, see Congress questioning our authority and the press fulminating about our getting out, then see us moving out, at what point will there be a mass shift of the peoples of this area to the wave of the future?

Mr. Rush: The world will know we have a new facility in Diego Garcia. Kagnew is an obsolete facility. Failure to close an obsolete facility hurts us.

Mr. Kissinger: The Ethiopians don't know Diego Garcia from Malta.

Mr. Rush: But it weakens our position to stay in Kagnew.

Mr. Porter: We should stay in Ethiopia. The question is would we be better off with or without Kagnew?

Mr. Noyes: We have a 100-man MAAG there.

Mr. Newsom: But remember that it gets harder every year to get MAP for Ethiopia. In FY 1973 we started with \$11 million and we were lucky to get \$0 million. If we start at \$8.2 million, we'll be lucky to get \$7 million. I agree we should get out of Kagnew but we have had a helluva struggle in OMB, State and Defense to get something to justify MAP for Ethiopia.

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Mr. Kissinger: So in order to get a reduced MAP program for Ethiopia, you have to throw in Kagnev.

Mr. Newsom: If we decide Kagnev goes, we will have to make a special effort to sustain the \$11-12 million figure. And we have to decide to sustain that figure.

Mr. Rush: We're not talking about cutting off Kagnev funding in FY 1974. The \$12 million will be there in FY 1974. We're talking about MAP for FY 1975.

Mr. Newsom: For 1974 too. We can't get the MAP figure up as long as we have Kagnev.

Mr. Kissinger: Do you think you can get it up without Kagnev?

Mr. Newsom: Ethiopia is pretty far down the line when we start carving up the pot. We need a decision to give priority attention to Ethiopia.

Mr. Clements: I agree. That's the purpose of this meeting--to get a new focus. As one option, I think Saudi Arabia can be prevailed on to put some funds into Ethiopia.

Mr. Porter: I don't believe it.

Mr. Kissinger: We can't get Saudi Arabia to put anything into Jordan.

Mr. Rush: The troubles for MAP would be less without Kagnev. It's a useless facility and it won't help us get MAP for Ethiopia.

Mr. Kissinger: If I were an African and I saw the Soviets building a naval facility in the neighborhood and the US getting out of the area and the MAP program cut, I would need a helluva lot of convincing. But I'm not an African.

In a more general framework, what can be done in Ethiopia related to the general Persian Gulf situation, other than a larger MAP program?

Mr. Newsom: There could be some degree of increased contact among Saudi Arabia, North Yemen and Ethiopia. Iran is a more remote possibility.

Mr. Kissinger: I'm all for it, but what would emerge from increased contact with Saudi Arabia? Some of the Saudi leaders don't strike me as being very knowledgeable about what's going on in Saudi Arabia, let alone Ethiopia. The Shah said King Faisal had told him Saudi Arabia would establish relations with Ethiopia when the Ethiopians all became Moslems.

Mr. Porter: At least he's consistent.

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Mr. Kissinger: Do the Saudis understand the importance of relations with Ethiopia?

Mr. Clements: No. We need to explain it to them, to expose them to our thinking. If we explain carefully, in depth and with patience, I will bet money they will buy the idea of putting money into Ethiopia. Let the Ethiopians come into Saudi Arabia and help train their army. They speak the same language.

Mr. Newsom: No they don't. The Saudis speak Arabic and the Ethiopians speak Amharic, a Semitic language.

Mr. Clements: I didn't mean they spoke the same tongue.

Mr. Newsom: We shouldn't exaggerate this, but there is a commonness of interest among Ethiopia, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. But they won't put money into Ethiopia as long as it has a tie with Israel. If we wanted to encourage Ethiopia to sacrifice that tie, the Saudis would pay money for it. But we don't want to do that. Israel attaches tremendous importance to its relations with Ethiopia. It's the only country in the Red Sea area with which it has relations.

Mr. Kissinger: Now I understand the Kagnew question. Let's get a paper which would give higher priority to Ethiopian needs in various fields, and which considers what connecting Ethiopia to other parts of the area would mean operationally. Let Defense get involved in this.

Mr. Newsom: We will proceed on the assumption that we want to maintain a presence in and the most effective relations with Somalia--that we may want to play a role in reducing tensions between Somalia and Ethiopia. We may want to try to get a waiver of the prohibition of assistance to Somalia that results from their having ships in trade with Cuba.

Mr. Kissinger: I have no objection so long as it doesn't panic the Ethiopians.

Mr. Porter: If the Canal is ever opened we will be very glad we decided to stay in Ethiopia. The Soviets will be down there in force.

Mr. Clements: We're 100% that we must stay in Ethiopia.

Mr. Kissinger: We just want to pull our people out!

Mr. Newsom: If we could just persuade the Russians to take out of Somalia what we take out of Ethiopia.

Gen. Walters: We want an input to that paper too.

Mr. Kissinger: Yes.

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