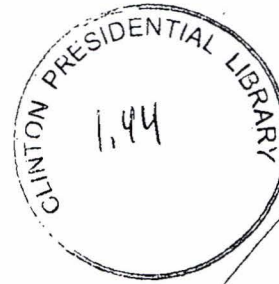


~~SECRET~~

3463

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY LAKE

SUBJECT: Recent U.S. Initiative on Burundi

This memorandum provides you with an update on recent U.S. efforts to help resolve the crisis in Burundi.

Current Situation: The situation in Burundi continues to deteriorate. Hundreds of people are dying weekly. Analysts predict that a high-level assassination, coup attempt or insurgent attack on the capital Bujumbura could precipitate massive killing and refugee flows, possibly on a scale approaching that of Rwanda in 1994.

Purpose of My Trip: To launch a new U.S. strategy to prevent a humanitarian disaster in Burundi. Our strategy has three components: 1) shoring up the fragile "moderate" Hutu-Tutsi coalition government; 2) urging the Tutsi moderates to rein in Tutsi extremists responsible for much of the killing; and 3) curbing the deadly and destabilizing extremist Hutu insurgency based in Zaire. We will also strengthen the negotiating efforts of former Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere by appointing a special envoy to assist him.

Results of My Trip: Our message was well-received. I believe my trip advanced the first two elements of our strategy by encouraging Burundian moderates to remain in positions of influence. Their departure would cause a dangerous power vacuum that the extremists would eagerly fill. While we continue to try to influence Tutsi extremists by threatening to isolate any government that comes to power by force, our actual leverage with them is limited. Those with greatest influence are Tutsi moderates in the Government and Army. In the past, they have curbed extremist activity by arresting perpetrators and appealing to the population to exercise restraint. I pushed them to do so again.

They asked for our assistance, in return, to curb Hutu extremist activity. We pledged to do all we could in that regard.

~~SECRET~~

Reason: 1.5 (d)

Declassify On: 5/20/06

Derived From: Multiple Sources

cc: Vice President
Chief of Staff

CLINTON LIBRARY PHOTOCOPY

The Need to Engage Mobutu: Fulfilling this pledge requires prevailing upon the Hutu insurgents and their Zairian sponsors to halt the civil war and commit to power-sharing negotiations under Nyerere's auspices. President Mobutu of Zaire can do much to rein in the Hutu insurgents and curb arms flows to the region.

At present, Zaire serves as a base for the Hutu insurgency as well as their main source of arms. Zaire also allows inflammatory radio broadcasts into Burundi from Zaire. Mobutu has failed, moreover, to arrest Rwandan war criminals resident in Zaire and allow UN monitors at airports used for arms shipments.

Meeting With Mobutu: To pressure Mobutu to play a more constructive role, we sent a high-level team to Zaire from May 20-21 to press Mobutu to take specific steps to curb the violence in Burundi. While our team made no commitments regarding U.S. support, they indicated we would be prepared to reciprocate in some fashion *if* Mobutu first took concrete, positive action. U.S. "carrots" might include ensuring that Mobutu receives full credit internationally for his role in a peace agreement, reconsidering providing him a visa to participate in the Atlanta Great Lakes conference, looking at ways to enhance our support for the upcoming elections in Zaire and supporting reestablishment of the Economic Community of Great Lakes States.

Mobutu assured our delegation of his control over the Hutu insurgents and offered to obtain a cease-fire declaration from them in return for a cease-fire from the Burundi government and the start of negotiations. Mobutu asked us to engage the Burundi government on a possible cease-fire date. After a cease-fire, Mobutu pledged to stop arms flows through Zaire.

While Mobutu is well-known for his grand promises and lack of action, we have various indications that he may be taking some of the steps he pledged. We must be cautious, however, to judge Mobutu on what he actually does and not on what he promises.

Moose Mission: To this end, George Moose and an interagency team returned to the region this week. Their goal is to try to broker a cease-fire and the start of all-party negotiations under President Nyerere's auspices.

Military Contingency Planning: Finally, the United States continues to press for joint military planning to enable the international community to respond rapidly to a humanitarian crisis should preventive diplomacy fail. We have reiterated our pledge made over a year ago to provide airlift and related support for an emergency humanitarian force, while making clear no U.S. ground troops will deploy to Burundi.

The UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Canada, Germany, France and the UN have recently agreed to join in planning efforts. Several African countries have indicated a willingness to participate in a Burundi force, if provided equipment, logistical and financial support. However, at present the international community is far from ready to deploy such a force.