

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Nixon
President William R. Tolbert, Jr., of Liberia
Major General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Tuesday, June 5, 1973
11:05 a.m. - 12:00 Noon

PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: You don't need military equipment like that.

[The press entered.]

Tolbert: We have to be prepared, but we don't want to tie up funds like that.

The President: Do you still have your house since you moved into the President's house?

Tolbert: Yes, I still have it. I still go there.

The President: I remember it well. I never ate so well.

Tolbert: Many thanks for sending Mrs. Nixon to my inauguration.

[The press was ushered out at 11:10 a.m.]

The President: You want pens, not swords.

The affair tonight will be dinner. We will sit next to each other. We can talk socially or privately. This is your first time visiting here as Chief of State. On the nonofficial visits -- there is little difference -- we put it on just like a state visit.

CLASSIFIED BY Brent Scowcroft
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5(B)(3)
AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp to Det



DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.6
NSC MEMO, 11/24/79, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, State Review 3/9/84
BY DA, NARA, DATE 3/21/04

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

We were both Vice Presidents long, long ago.

Why don't you tell me all about yourself and your country?

Tolbert: I am happy to be here. Your country has been very helpful to my country.

First, congratulations for all you have done as President. I have admired your bold new initiatives for peace in the world.

The President: That is very kind. We work at it. We have to do it together.

Tolbert: The relations of our two countries have been special.

The President: Of all the countries in Africa, they have to be special.

Tolbert: It should now be very special, because we are personal friends. What can be done in a very special way can be very beneficial to both of us. It blesses those who give and who receive it.

This special relationship would enhance the way the world sees the way the United States treats its friends. I am engaged in my country in a war against poverty, ignorance, disease. My goal is to change that condition. I inherited these serious economic conditions and I am attacking it.

Over 60 percent of the children are out of school.

Parts of the country are cut off from other parts.

Most of the people live on subsistence.

I want to bridge the gap between the educated and the uneducated, between the haves and the have nots.

I have admired the way you people do things -- your self-reliance. I am teaching this to my people. Our aim is a rallying of the spirit into a new national self-consciousness and self-reliance.

In only nine months time, we have realized \$4.5 million. It seems small, but it is the spirit. I work and work; I work 18 hours a day. I am obsessed to change my country.



In Africa there is a revolutionary spirit in many countries. They are not patient to change things by evolution. I say revolution is wrong; the answer is evolution, but with speed.

If we carry on vigorous agricultural programs, we can develop an improved standard of living, and a money economy. Parts of the country are isolated. In one area I visited, they didn't even know the national anthem when it was played.

We are friends indeed. Friends need friends. I give you what I have -- all the confidence in you that I can give. You have done so much. I am attracted to you -- we are much the same. We are pioneers, bridgebuilders, sometimes misunderstood.

The President: It is part of the price.

Tolbert: We are prepared to die for a cause. We have our inter-African problems. I try to keep friendly relations with my neighbors so I don't have to spend all our money on defense. I have excellent relations with my neighbors. They look up to me for guidelines. Economic strength strengthens one's will. If Liberia develops, my voice on your behalf will be stronger.

At a recent OAU meeting, they wanted me to be Chairman, but I need to concentrate on Liberia. I can lose myself in one cause -- and now it must be Liberia, not Africa.

That is the situation. Our problem is a serious economic situation. Sometimes when we speak out, there are hazards. To protect our coastal area, we need boats; our older ones are out of commission. We need it for economic reasons.

On May 19 we started some development in every province of the country, on the anniversary of our Rally for Development.

I brought you a copy of my OAU speech. We should go all out on social-economic development, regionally, bilaterally, multilaterally. This concept was accepted. I am trying to set an example, developing close cooperation with our neighbors.

Now a word on the Middle East. I spoke to President Sadat, who conveyed to you his regards. He wants to be friends. The Middle East is the corner of the whole world. It is a complicated problem.



We have Security Council Resolution 242 and the OAU resolution approving it. The resolutions are okay, but it takes people of courage to implement the resolutions.

I am friendly with both sides, so I can talk to both. Some people want to cut off relations with Israel -- but I say we must be able to talk.

The occupied areas -- we must figure out how to guarantee Israel's security before giving up those areas.

I talked to Mrs. Meir. One way to move would be to give up some of the unimportant areas. There must be recognition of the territory and security of Israel. Mrs. Meir and President Sadat both want me to visit. You, with your courage, perhaps and you can give pointers.

The President: We are trying to help. You are suggesting what is an interim settlement. If Israel would agree, Sadat says he would work for an interim settlement only if a final settlement is also understood. Israel's elections are a tough period. We are talking to Israel publicly and privately. If Sadat would give a little. Israel is concerned with its territory and security; Egypt is concerned with its sovereignty, and must have back every inch of its territory. Israel says "We need some for our defense."

You may tell President Sadat you passed his message. There is nothing I would like more than to get the problem off dead center. If we could get an interim settlement, with some general idea of an overall settlement. . . . If Egypt would move a bit, maybe we could get Israel to move. Egypt says an interim settlement would become permanent.

I will take to heart your concerns. I hope you will work at it.

War would be a tragedy. Israel would win now, but not in five or ten years. Time is on the Arabs' side.

If Egypt starts a war, it would be beaten unless the Soviet Union intervened.



If both sides could agree to some general principles, and then move on concrete steps, then perhaps we could get moving. Egypt resists that.

Tolbert: We can try. President Sadat said he is interested in having relations with your country. He seemed to be in earnest. That is one reason he kicked out the Russians.

Sekon Toure asked me to give his regards. He is anxious for closer economic relations with us. The resources of Guinea are enormous. They are intact. The people have gone through a struggle and have benefitted themselves. They have strong character. I personally would like American influence to dominate there. Toure lives under fears. He fears a Portuguese invasion in reaction to some of the African positions he takes.

The President: I will keep this in mind.

Tolbert: You can't lose. If there is greater leaning toward the East because of the economic benefits, the East will develop other -- political -- ties.

I see the situation as a friend. All I can give is moral encouragement.

The President: One thing is important. Nobody fears Liberia. You can be a friend to all and a moderating influence on radicalism. There is a storm of radicalism running through the area -- true revolution. If you can influence your fellow presidents for progress, not extremism. The future of Africa will not be made by extremists but by those like you -- who are progressive.

You need self-help, development, and welcoming private enterprise.

Uganda -- that's too bad. He is acting like a madman.

Tolbert: I had to talk to him, and it helped.

The President: You can help in these things. Is Burundi hopeless?



Tolbert: It's not hopeless. We are looking into it. Even the situation between Ethiopia and Somalia. Somalia wasn't even going to come to the OAU. I got him to come and we set up a border crossing to use our good offices to settle it. This is Africans settling African problems.

The President: You can play a constructive role.

With regard to bilaterals, we will do what we can.

We are in a difficult situation, but we will do what we can. If we can't, our friends understand.

Tolbert: Of course.

The President: You are interested in the world. We are meeting with China and the Soviet Union. We opened up a dialogue with China; we will be meeting with the Soviet Union again on SALT, etc. But our talks will not be at the expense of our friends.

Our concentration this year on the Soviet Union and Europe will not be at the expense of Africa. Secretary Rogers went to Africa. Latin America is not like Africa. You are the only African country with a special relationship with us. Others are tied to Europe. But we are greatly interested in Africa and that will become apparent. This is an important area of the world. We are working on the hot spots in the world in order to hold down the danger, and the U.S. must deal in an imaginative way with the superpowers.

Your trip will mean that we have not lessened our interest in the people of Africa. It has resources; the governments are new -- except yours. There are problems -- Rhodesia and Zambia, South Africa -- it's important there to rule out the use of force. Sending a UN force to South Africa isn't realistic and won't work. We don't need more war. We are just ending a long war; we know that peace (short of surrender) is better than war. We will defend our interests, but we are interested in peace, not war. We don't want to discriminate against anyone. Tell your African friends we don't have designs on anyone.

Our meetings with the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union don't mean that I agree with Communism, but the world is so small that we must learn to live together.



Tolbert: That is what I say. Toure leans to the left but he is a friend.

The President: It was good to see you.

[The meeting ended.]



Tolbert Mtg 5 June 73 ✓

1107 P - You don't need that kind of equipment like that
T - We have to be prepared, but we don't want to tie up funds like that.

P - Do you still have your house since moved into Leo's house

T - Yes, still have it. Still go there

P - Remember it well. Work out so well

1110 T - Pines left. — by Mrs. IV. & my organization

P - You want peace, not war.

Open tonight will be dinner. Sit next to each other. We can talk socially or privately.

This your first time as chief of state. On these non-official visits - there is little difference - we just it as just like state visit.

We were both VP's long, long ago.

~~For~~ Why don't you tell me all about yourself country.

T - Happy to be here. Your country has been very helpful to my country.

1st Congrat for all you have done as Pres. I have admired your bold new initiatives for peace in the world.

Very kind. We work at it. Have to do it together.

T - Relations for 2 countries have been special.

Of all countries in opinion, they have been special.

T - It should now be very special, because



and our personal friends. What can be
done in very special way can be very beautiful
& helpful. It blesses those who give & who
receive. &

This special relationship would enhance
the way & world sees the way U.S. treats its friends
down in a war against poverty, ignorance,
disease, ~~and~~ my goal is to change that
condition. I inherited that series - I was written
and I am attacking it.

Over 60% of children are out of school
Parts are cut off from other parts
Most are subsistence

Want to bridge gap bet ed & uned, between
haves & have nots.

I have admired & my own do things - all
alliance. I am looking this to my people.
A rolling of spirit into new ^{will} world self
consciousness & self-reliance.

In only 9 mos time we realized \$4 1/2 mil
Seems small, but it is a spirit. I walk
& work, work 18 hrs. I am obsessed to
change my country.

In opinion there is unwilling spirit
in many countries. They are not patient
to change by evolution. I say evolution
wrong, evolution, but w/ speed.



If we carry on nigama aji program, we can
drop, improve standard of living, many living,
Part of country are isolated. One area stage visited
they didn't even know another when it was played
All are friends indeed. Friends need friends. All
give you what I have - all is confidence in
you I can give. You have done so much.
I am attracted to you - we are much & some
we are pioneers bridgebuilders, sometimes
unintentional.

P Part of price.

T We are prepared to die for a cause. We have
inter-afrikan problems. I try to keep friendly
relations w/ my neighbors so I don't have to explain
our defense. I have excellent relations w/ my
neighbors, they look up to me for guidelines.
Even strength strengthens our voice. If Libria
attempts, my voice on your behalf will be
stronger.

At recent OAU, they wanted me to be Chairman, but
I need to concentrate on Liberia. I can
lose myself in only one cause - & now it
must be Liberia, not Africa
That is set. Our problem is semi-learned.



Sometimes when we speak out ~~and~~ these are hazards. To protect ourselves and, we need boots, drawn out of ^{common} ~~withdrawn~~ - need it for economic reasons.

On May 19 we started to send delegations in every province of country, an anniversary of ^{ann} rally for delegations.

Ben got you copy of my OAU speech. We should go all out on our - our delegations. Regionally, bilaterally, multilaterally. This concept was accepted. I am trying to set up a group, delegations who work as / negotiators.

has a word on M.F. I spoke to Sadat, who conveyed regards. He wants to refer to M.F. is concern of whole world. A very hot problem.

We have SC 242 and OAU resolution opposing it. Resolutions are ok but it takes people of courage to implement resolutions.

I am friendly w/ both sides, so I can talk w/ both. Some want to cut off relations w/ Israel but I say must be able to talk.

The occupied areas - must figure out how to guarantee Israel security w/ out giving up these areas.

Talked to him, One way to move would be to give up some of the non-occupied areas.

Want to see way of treaty + security of Israel,
Nasser + Sadat both want me to visit.

You, w/ your courage, perhaps you can give
points.

P We are trying to help - you are saying
what is interim settlement. If Israel would
agree, Sadat says he would not interim
settlement only if final settlement also understood.
Sadat elections are through final. We are talking
to Israeli public & private. If Sadat would
give a bit, Israel is concerned w/ its
territory + security. E concerned w/ its territory
must have back every inch of territory. Israel
says we need some for defense.

You may tell Sadat you passed his msg.
Nothing would be more than get off dead
center. If we could get interim settlement
w/ some good idea of overall settlement of
E would move a bit, maybe we could get
I to move. E say interim would become
become permanent.

Israel talks to want your comments. Hope you
will work at it.

War would be tragedy. Israel would win
now, but not in 5-10 yrs. Finish Arab
kill.

E starts war, would be lost unless SC
intervened



If both could agree to general principles, then
would be a concrete step, then we could
get moving. I want that.

T All countries. Said said international relations
all your country. Said in earnest (that one
was not behind out Russia)

T Some asked me to give his regards. He is anxious
for closer relations w/ US. Resources
of America are enormous. They are int'l. People
have gone through struggle & have benefited
themselves. They have strong character. I
personally would like US influence to dominate
there. Some times make fears. Fears of
Port. invasion, nation to some of ^{Asia} ~~Europe~~
to take.

P I will keep this in mind.

T You can't lose. If greater leaning toward East
because of their benefits, East will do other
(political) things. I see contract as a point. All
I can give is moral encouragement.

P One thing important. In both press behavior. You
can be friend to all & maintaining influence
on radicalism. There is a strain of
radicalism among them. There
radicalism. If you can influence young fellows
presently for progress, not optimism. Future
of Africa will not be made by extremists
but by those like you - progressives.



Used self help, changed, withering private
enterprise

Agenda - that is too bad. He is acting like
a madman.

T I had to talk to him, and it helped

P You can help ~~it~~ in these things. Do Burundi
hygiene

T Not hygiene, we looking into it.

From set between Ethiopia & Somalia. Somali
wasn't even going to come to U.A.U. I got
him to come, & we set up a border commission
to use good offices to settle. This is
officially settling of Af-problems.

P You can play existential role.

As regard to borderlands. We will do
what we can.

We are in difficult situation but will
do what we can. If we can't, friends
understand.

T of course

P You are interested in world. We are mostly
w/ China & SO. Opening of dialogue w/ China,
will be meeting w/ SO again, SALT, etc.
But our talks will not be at expense of
our friends. Our concentration this year on
SO & East will not be at expense of Africa.
~~Agree with Africa~~
It is not like Africa. You are only African
country w/ special relation w/ us. Others

tail to E. m. But we greatly interested
in again a that ~~we~~ will become
opponent. This is one world we are
working on a hot spots in world in
order to hold down danger, & US must
deal in imaginative way w/ Superpowers
Your trip will mean that we have not
lessened our interest in prophetic Africa.
It has resources, goods are now - hyper
game - There are problems - Abolition/Coastal,
South Africa - important those to rule out
peace (Send UN force to S.A. can't work,
won't work) We don't need more war
just ending a long war, we know that peace
(short of summit) is better than war. We
won't depend on the interests, but we
are interested in peace, not war. We
don't want to dominate anyone - Tell you
Africa friends we don't have designs on
any one.

Our strategy w/ PRC & SO doesn't mean
danger w/ Cuba, but would be so
small we must learn to live together

T That is what I say. Some lessons byt but
to is a friend.

1200

