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INTERNATIONAL
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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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In reply refer to:
I-13228/82

19 AUG 1982

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting between Secretary Weinberger and Liberian Head of State,
Chairman Samuel K. Doe (U)

Time and Place: 11:15 a.m., 18 August 1982, in Secretary Weinberger's Office.

Participants:

U.S.

Secretary of Defense,
Casper W. Weinberger
Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff,
General John W. Vessey, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of Defense, ISA,
Francis J. West, Jr.
Commandant JFK Center for Military
Assistance, BGEN James C. Lutz
Acting Director, DSAA,
Walter B. Ligon
Ambassador William Swing
R. R. Dentel (notetaker), ISA/Africa

Liberia

Chairman Samuel K. Doe
H. Boima Fahnbulleh Jr.,
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Joseph Guannu, Ambassador
to the U.S.
Col. Abraham Kollie, Sec.
Gen., PRC
LTC Alfred Zeh, Member PRC
LTC Jacob Swan, Member PRC
G. Alvin Jones, Minister of
Finance
Col Gray D. Allison, Minister
of Information
LTC Robert Zuo, Member PRC
Mr. John Hansford,
Liberian Protocol
BGen Glade, Assistant to
Chairman Doe

(U) Secretary Weinberger opened the dialogue with warm greetings to Chairman Doe and his delegation. He then stated his appreciation of the importance of security assistance, and noted his continuing personal efforts to convince the Congress and the American public of this. The Secretary stressed the importance which the U.S. attaches to its relationship with Liberia.

(U) Chairman Doe responded by thanking the Secretary for the honors ceremony and the welcome to the Pentagon. Doe emphasized that Liberia has never solicited military assistance from anyone except the U.S. He noted almost

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immediately that Liberia needs more than training for its indigenous forces and stated that "training without equipment is simply a waste." He went on to say that his own Army is aware of other neighboring West African states which have received training and equipment from Soviet, Libyan and other Bloc countries. At this juncture the Chairman stated that because of the Liberian Armed Forces perception of this situation, many of his officers have questioned relying solely on the U.S. to provide military assistance. Since it is difficult to satisfy the demands of the Liberian Armed Forces and the individuals on the Peoples Redemption Council, Doe feels his life is in peril.

(4) Assistant Secretary West asserted that other countries that solicit Soviet and Bloc aid do so at the risk of their own freedom.

(4) Chairman Doe then alluded to possible future threats from Sierra Leone and Guinea, while emphasizing that currently there are no real threats from either of these countries. What the future holds is uncertain. He emphasized that his Army needs equipment and that if it is not received this "could interfere with the long time friendship between the U.S. and Liberia."

(4) In reply, Secretary Weinberger made reference to the Survey Team Report that was to be delivered to the Chairman during the luncheon that immediately followed the meeting. The Secretary commended Chairman Doe for keeping the welfare of his men as a first priority. The Secretary then noted the necessity of congressional approval for increases in Liberia's security assistance budget. He also underscored the need to identify specific needs and areas that needed strengthening in the Liberian Army.

(4) Chairman Doe in reply stated that his Army needed troop transport trucks, small arms, ammunition and communications equipment. He made a brief reference to Liberia's need for "an Air Force," but did not pursue this. Doe continually emphasized the need for troop transport, and at this juncture, stated a need for helicopter capability.

(4) Secretary Weinberger agreed with Chairman Doe that troop transport and communications capability are vital to the efficient functioning of an armed force. The Secretary emphasized the need for standardization of equipment to help alleviate maintenance concerns. Specifically, the Secretary requested of the Chairman his most immediate priorities.

(4) Chairman Doe restated his needs and mentioned that in addition to truck transport, a helicopter capability is necessary for travel to areas inaccessible by trucks. The Secretary turned the discussion back to the Chairman's initial requests, viz, trucks, small arms, ammunition and communications equipment. The Secretary then queried the Chairman regarding the type of communications equipment already on line in the Liberian Army. Colonel Gray Allison, Minister of Information, responded by saying that the Liberian Army has no communications capability.

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(S) The discussions concluded with Chairman Doe asking the Secretary specifically what he, as Chairman of the PRC, could tell his Cabinet concerning U.S. aid when he returns to Monrovia. At this point ASD West responded by stating that these problems will be looked into and a report will be prepared for the Chairman's examination before he departs the U.S.

R. R. Dentel

R. R. Dentel
Liberia Desk Officer,
ISA/ Africa Region

Approved

Carl R. Smith

Carl R. Smith 24 AUG 1982
Major General, USAF
Military Assistant to the
Secretary of Defense

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