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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Luncheon Meeting with President Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Acting Secretary of State
Andrew Card, Assistant to the President, and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
Herman J. Cohen, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs
Rush W. Taylor, Jr. U.S. Ambassador to Togo
Robert C. Frasure, Director for African Affairs, (Notetaker)
Alec Toumayan, Interpreter
Gnassingbe Eyadema, President
Barry Moussa Barque, Planning and Mines Minister
Gbenyon Amegboth, Minister Delegate at the Presidency
Koffi Djondo, Industry and State Enterprises Minister
Kwaovi Johnson, Information Minister
Komla Alipui, Finance Minister
Yaovi Adodo, Foreign Affairs Minister
Ellom-Kodjo Schuppisu, Togolese Ambassador to U.S.
Interpreter

DECLASSIFIED
PER E.O. 12958,
AS AMENDED
2000-0429-F
ZL 8/21/09

DATE, TIME July 31, 1990, 1200 a.m.- 1:15 p.m. EST
PLACE: Old Family Dining Room

The President: What can you tell me about this export zone you have set up? (U)

President Eyadema: (Turning to Barque) Will you describe it? (U)

Minister Barque: Several years ago, we began with a survey, working with OPIC. We decided that our area was the right place for such a facility. The master plans are completed, and operations are beginning. Some companies are interested. (U)

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The President: I hope it works. We have a lot of confidence in OPIC. What kinds of companies will benefit? (U)

Minister Barque: A lot. Textiles, shoes, labor intensive operations in general. Electronics. (U)

The President: We want a satisfactory conclusion to the Uruguay round. Agriculture is the hang-up. The EC is dragging its feet on it. We are committed to a more open trading system. That will benefit developing countries in textiles in particular. (Ø)

You know I have got this Textile Protection Bill coming down from Capitol Hill at me. It passed the Senate and will pass the House. I will have to veto it and hope we can sustain it. In our case, textiles are a profitable industry, but a lot of jobs have been lost. I am determined to fight against protectionism. And that will benefit small countries. (Ø)

We have not talked about South Africa yet. Mandela was here. We encouraged him toward a peaceful solution. We told him that de Klerk is a most reasonable leader in our view. (U)

I had the feeling that Mandela is caught between several forces. He was at that big meeting to salute the SACP at a time when Communist parties are folding around the world. He must be getting bad advice. I have great respect for him, but..... What are your views? Are you optimistic? (Ø)

President Eyadema: De Klerk does not have an easy situation in front of him. With patience, they will find a peaceful solution. I am fearful of a right wing coup. (Ø)

The President: That worries me too. Mandela had this theory that, if we lift sanctions, it would strengthen the hand of white radicals. I do not understand the logic in that. (Ø)

President Eyadema: A gesture of good will is needed to encourage de Klerk. (U)

The President: That is our view too. But we do not want to be the first to raise sanctions. I do not want to sound too negative about Mandela, but it seems to me the guy is living in a time warp. He goes out and salutes Castro and Qadhafi. I asked him, "why do you want to do that?" He said, "because they helped me when we needed help." He was in jail that whole time. (Ø)

We need to keep the process going forward. We would like to see a society free of color barriers. (Ø)

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Do you follow North Africa? I guess the Algerian government is in trouble from the left. (Ø)

President Eyadema: We follow Western Sahara. (U)

The President: Are you optimistic about a settlement? (U)

President Eyadema: Yes. (U)

The President: Do you have good relations with all of them, Mauritania? (U)

President Eyadema: Yes. We were asked to intervene at the OAU Summit on Mauritania/Senegal. Diouf has agreed, but the Mauritaniens have not said yes. (U)

The President: Let us hope it works. (U)

What about Nigeria? I am fascinated by the place. Can Babangida keep going forward? What is your view? (U)

President Eyadema: The coup shook him. The journalists were at the root of it. He is a good man, very amicable. Babangida and Gowan were both good men. (Ø)

The President: Gowan has been gone for a long time. He went to London, didn't he? (Ø)

President Eyadema: Yes. We put ECOWAS together. (Ø)

The President: Does he want to return someday? (U)

President Eyadema: Babangida gave him an amnesty. (U)

The President: Do we have any bilateral issues? (U)

President Eyadema: I wanted to hand over this paper. (U)

The President: How is your economy doing? (U)

President Eyadema: Since 1982, we have not had much growth. It is a question of the drop in basic commodity prices. We have had to take measure, salary freezes, waive taxes on farmers, etc. (U)

The President: Do you have good relations with the IMF? (Ø)

President Eyadema: We are one of their best students! (U)

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The President: It is not without pain. Do you want to hear about my budget problems? (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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