

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

1 of 1

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
#2 memo	NSC meeting on the Congo Secret <i>sanitized 2-3-21</i>	<i>open 1/10/97 NY 93-464</i> 3-P 08/11/64	A

FILE LOCATION

NATIONAL SECURITY FILE, National Security Council File
NSC Meetings, Vol. 3 Tab 21, 8/11/64, Congo

RESTRICTION CODES

- (A) Closed by Executive Order 11652 governing access to national security information.
- (B) Closed by statute or by the agency which originated the document.
- (C) Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in the donor's deed of gift.

21

2

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

NSC MEETING ON THE CONGO - 12:30 PM AUGUST 11, 1964

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Department of State - Secretary Rusk, Under
Secretary Ball, Under Secretary Harriman
Department of Defense - Secretary McNamara,
Deputy Secretary Vance, Mr. McNaughton
CIA - Mr. McCone
OEP - Mr. McDermott
AID - Mr. Bell
Treasury Department - Secretary Dillon
USIA - Mr. Rowan
White House - Messrs. Bundy, Bromley Smith,
Reedy, Cater, Valenti, Brubeck

Governor Harriman reported on his talk with Spaak in Brussels and on agreements reached there regarding support for gendarmerie and mercenary forces and additional US military assistance. Harriman felt that these steps while useful would probably not meet fully the military need, and expressed concern with Chicom involvement. He said the Congolese army in most cases has proved useless, that the people in government are demoralized and Leopoldville in danger.

With regard to possible US-European forces, he said the Europeans are unlikely to participate without US involvement but thought the US role could be limited to an air contribution. He will talk to the Western European Ambassadors in Washington along these lines.

The President asked what countries and how much force are being considered.

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6
NLJ 93-464
By cb, NARA Date 10-30-96

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-2-

Harriman said France, Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Canada with a maximum 3,000 men for garrison duty only. Actual combat operations would be left to Congolese army and gendarmes but they would require white officers. Although the Belgians have talked of the possibility of "doing business" with the rebels Harriman believes he convinced Spaak that this is a myth.

McCone endorsed Harriman's stress on the Chicom role and expressed similar skepticism about doing business with the rebels. Although he thought the military problem is quantitatively small, he was pessimistic about Congolese military capacity and thought Western troops would be necessary.

In response to a Bundy question Harriman said that if Nigerians or other Africans will provide troops European intervention is avoidable. Without African help, European help might be needed within two weeks. Immediate US efforts should be concentrated on air support and pressure for African assistance to the Congo. UN help is unlikely because the Russians would veto Security Council action and a General Assembly at this time is undesirable.

Rusk said that while the present trouble is tribal unrest and rebel bands moving freely in the absence of effective police, we must assume that if disintegration continues the Communists will take over. The job can be done on a small scale if done now, and it should be put squarely to the Europeans as their responsibility. We should urge them immediately to put troops into Leopoldville, using Presidential pressure if necessary.

Vance reported on the military situation and status of US aircraft being supplied. McNamara expressed his strong agreement with Rusk and suggested that, if the Europeans fail to accept responsibility, we should not continue to carry the burden alone in the Congo.

The President expressed doubt as to whether such a choice is open to us, and said we may have to continue our role regardless of what others do. However, he added, this may be the point at which to make a basic issue with the Europeans of their accepting a share of responsibility in situations such as the Congo.

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-3-

McNamara indicated his belief that we should be prepared to increase our military assistance to Ethiopia and Nigeria perhaps as much as \$10 million, if this would help them in providing military support to the Congo.

Dillon expressed the view that direct American involvement in the Congo should be considered only as an extreme last resort. General Wheeler concurred in this as "the long held view of the JCS."

The President said emphatically that we all share this view. He said that Harriman has authority to make strong representations to the Europeans for help and should ask Spaak to make similar approaches. The President asked for a report by Friday, August 14 on our success in getting European or African military help for the Congo.

The President also authorized financial and logistic support to any African countries in meeting the expense of any such help; and air transport assistance for moving European troops.

The President observed that time is running out and the Congo must be saved. When these steps have been tried, he said, we will look at the situation again to consider what further decisions may be required.

WB
William H. Brubeck

~~SECRET~~

ATTENDANCE LIST FOR THE 539th NSC MEETING
AUGUST 11, 1964, AT 12:30 IN THE CABINET ROOM
OF THE WHITE HOUSE

The President of the United States, Presiding

CLA

John A. McCone, Director

DEFENSE

Robert S. McNamara, Secretary
Cyrus Vance, Deputy Secretary
John McNaughton, Assistant Secretary (ISA)

JCS

General Earle G. Wheeler, USA, Chairman

OEP

Edward A. McDermott, Director

STATE

Dean Rusk, Secretary
George W. Ball, Under Secretary
Averell Harriman, Under Secretary for Political Affairs

TREASURY

C. Douglas Dillon, Secretary

USIA

Carl T. Rowan, Director

WHITE HOUSE

George Reedy
Walter Jenkins
Bill Moyers
Jack Valenti
Douglas Cater
McGeorge Bundy
Bromley Smith
William Brubeck

AID

David Bell