

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
MEMORANDUM-46

(SECRET) March 17, 1978

Presidential Review Memorandum/NSC-46

TO: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
The Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Black Africa and the U.S. Black Movement

The President has directed that a comprehensive review be made of current developments in Black Africa from the point of view of their possible impact on the black movement in the United States.

The review should consider:

1. Long term tendencies of social and political development, and the degree to which they are consistent with or contradict the U.S. interests.
2. Proposals for durable contacts between radical African leaders and leftist leaders of the U.S. black community.
3. Appropriate steps to be taken inside and outside the country in order to inhibit any pressure by radical African leaders and organizations on the U.S. black community for the latter to exert influence on the policy of the Administration toward Africa.

The President has directed that the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Africa perform this review.

The review should be forwarded to the NSC Political Analysis Committee by April 20th.

Zbigniew Braezinski

cc: The Secretary of the Treasury
The Secretary of Commerce
The Attorney General
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

SECRET

excerpts from
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP FOR AFRICA
STUDY IN RESPONSE TO PRESIDENTIAL SECURITY REVIEW MEMORANDUM # NSC-46
BLACK AFRICA AND THE U.S. BLACK MOVEMENT

III. A. U.S. INTERESTS IN BLACK AFRICA

A multiplicity of interests influences the U.S. attitude toward Black Africa. The most important of these interests can be summarized as follows:

1. Political

If Black African states assume attitudes hostile to the U.S. national interest, our policy toward the white regimes, which is a key element in our relations with the black states, may be subjected by the latter to great pressure for fundamental change. Thus the West may face a real danger of being deprived of access to the enormous raw material resources of southern Africa which are vital for our defense needs as well as of losing control over the Cape sea routes by which approximately 65% of Middle Eastern oil is supplied to Western Europe.

Moreover, such a development may bring about internal political difficulties by intensifying the activity of the black movement in the United States itself.

It should also be borne in mind that Black Africa is an integral part of a continent where tribal and regional discord, economic backwardness, inadequate infrastructures, drought and famine, are constant features of the scene. In conjunction with the artificial borders imposed by the former colonial powers, guerrilla warfare in Rhodesia and the widespread indignation against apartheid in South Africa, the above factors provide the communist states with ample opportunities for furthering their aims. This must necessarily redound to the detriment of U.S. political interests.

2. Economic

Black Africa is increasingly becoming an outlet for U.S. exports and investments. The mineral resources of the area continue to be of great value for the normal functioning of industry in the United States and allied countries. In 1977, U.S. direct investments in black Africa totaled about \$1.8 billion and exports \$2.2 billion. New prospects of substantial profit would continue to develop in the countries concerned.

IV. BLACK AFRICA AND THE U.S. BLACK MOVEMENT

Apart from the above-mentioned factors adverse to U.S. strategic interests, the nationalist liberation movement in black Africa can act as a catalyst with far-reaching effects on the American black community by stimulating its organizational consolidation and by inducing radical actions. Such a result would be likely if Zaire went the way of Angola and Mozambique.

A recurrence of the events of 1967-68 would do grievous harm to U.S. prestige, especially in view of the concern of the present Administration with human rights issues. Moreover, the Administration would

have to take specific steps to stabilize the situation. Such steps might be misunderstood both inside and outside the United States.

In order to prevent such a trend and protect U.S. national security interest, it would appear essential to elaborate and carry out effective countermeasures.

1. Possibility of Joint Action by U.S. Black and African Nationalist Movement.

In elaborating U.S. policy toward black Africa, due weight must be given to the fact that there are 25 million American blacks whose roots are African and who consciously or subconsciously sympathize with African nationalism.

The living conditions of the black population should also be taken into account. Immense advances in the field are accompanied by a long-lasting high rate of unemployment, especially among the young, and by poverty and traditional dissatisfaction with government social welfare standards.

These factors taken together may provide a basis for joint actions of a concrete nature by the African nations movement and the U.S. Black community. Basically, such actions would take the form of demonstrations and public protests, but the likelihood of violence cannot be ignored. There would also be attempts to co-ordinate their political activity both locally and in international organizations.

Inside the United States, these actions could include protest demonstrations against our policy toward South Africa accompanied by demands for boycotting corporations and banks which maintain links with that country; attempts to establish a permanent black lobby in Congress including activist leftist radical groups and black legislators; the re-emergence of pan-African ideals; resumption of protest marches recalling the days of Martin Luther King; renewal of the extremist national idea of establishing an "African Republic" on American soil. Finally, leftist radical elements of the black community could resume extremist actions in the style of the defunct Black Panther Party.

Internationally, damage could be done to the United States by co-ordinated activity of African states designed to condemn U.S. policy toward South Africa and to initiate discussion on the U.S. racial issue at the United Nations where the African representation constitutes a powerful bloc with about one third of all the votes.

A menace to U.S. economic interests, though not a critical one, could be posed by a boycott by black African states against American companies which maintain contact with South African and Rhodesia. If the idea of economic assistance to black Americans shared by some African regimes could be realized by their placing orders in the United States mainly with companies owned by blacks, they could gain a limited influence on the U.S. black community.

In the above context, we must envisage the possibility, however remote, that black Americans interested in African affairs may refocus their attention on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Taking into account the African descent of American blacks, it is reasonable to anticipate that their sympathies would lie with the Arabs who are closer to them in spirit and, in some cases, related to them by blood. Black involvement in lobbying to support the Arabs may lead to serious dissension between American blacks and Jews. The

likelihood of extremist actions by either side is negligible, but the discord may bring about tension in the internal political climate of the United States.

2. Political Options

In the context of long-term strategy, the United States cannot afford a radical change in the fundamentals of its African policy, which is designed for maximum protection of national security. In the present case, emphasis is laid on the importance of black Africa for U.S. political, economic, and military interests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In weighing the range of U.S. interests in black Africa, basic recommendations, arranged without intent to imply priority, are:

1. Specific steps should be taken with the help of appropriate government agencies to inhibit coordinated activity of the black movement in the United States.
2. Special clandestine operations should be launched by the CIA to generate mistrust and hostility in American and world opinion against joint activity of the two forces, and to cause division among black African radical national groups and their leaders.
3. U.S. embassies to black African countries specially interested in southern Africa must be highly circumspect in view of the activity of certain political circles and influential individuals opposing the objectives and methods of U.S. policy toward South Africa. It must be kept in mind that the failure of U.S. strategy in South Africa would adversely affect American standing throughout the world. In addition, this would mean a significant diminution of U.S. influence in Africa and the emergence of new difficulties in our internal situation due to worsening economic prospects.
4. The FBI should mount surveillance operations against black African representatives and collect sensitive information on those, especially at the UN, who oppose U.S. policy toward South Africa. The information should include facts on their links with the leaders of the black movement in the United States, thus making possible at least partial neutralization of the adverse effects of their activity.

V. TRENDS IN THE AMERICAN BLACK MOVEMENT

In connection with our African policy, it is highly important to evaluate correctly the present state of the black movement in the United States and, basing ourselves on all available information, to try to devise a course for its future development. Such an approach is strongly suggested by our perception of the fact that American blacks form a single ethnic group potentially capable of causing extreme instability in our strategy toward South Africa. This may lead to critical differences between the United States and black Africa in particular. It would also encourage the Soviet Union to step up its interference in the region. Finally, it would pose a serious threat to the delicate structure of race relations within the United States. All the above considerations give rise to concern for the future securing of the United States.

Since the mid-1960s, when legislation on the human rights was passed and Martin Luther King murdered, federal and local measures to improve black welfare have been taken, as a result of which the U.S. black movement has undergone considerable changes.

The principal changes are as follows:

*Social and economic issues have supplanted political aims as the main preoccupations of the movement, and actions formerly planned on a nationwide scale are now being organized locally.

*Fragmentation, and a lack of organizational unity in movement.

*Decrease of influence in the movement's extremist groups.

*Sharp social stratification of the black population and lack of policy options which could reunite them.

*Want of a national leader of standing comparable to that of Martin Luther King.

B. THE RANGE OF POLICY OPTIONS

The concern for the future security of the United States makes necessary the range of policy options. Arranged without intent to imply priority, they are:

(a) to enlarge programs, within the framework of the present budget, for the improvement of the social and economic welfare of American blacks in order to ensure continuing development of present trends in the black movement;

(b) to elaborate and bring into effect a special program designed to perpetuate division in the black movement; neutralize the most active groups of leftist radical organizations representing different social strata of the black community; to encourage divisions in black circles;

(c) to preserve the present climate which inhibits the emergence from within the black leadership of a person capable of exciting nationwide appeal;

(d) to work out and realize preventive operations in order to impede durable ties between U.S. black organizations and radical groups in African states;

(e) to support actions designed to sharpen social stratification in the black community, which would lead to the widening and perpetuation of the gap between successful educated blacks and the poor, giving rise to growing antagonism between different black groups and weakening of the movement as a whole;

(f) to facilitate the greatest possible expansion of black business by granting government contracts and loans or favorable terms to black businessmen;

(g) to take every possible means through the AFL-CIO leaders to counteract the increasing influences of black labor organizations which function in all major unions, particularly the national Coalition of Black Trade Unions, and its leadership including the creation of real preconditions for adverse and hostile reaction among white trade unionists to demands for improvement of social and economic welfare of the blacks;

(h) to support the nomination at federal and local levels of loyal black public figures to elective offices, to government agencies and the court. This would promote the achievement of a twofold purpose: first, it would be easier to control the activity of local black representatives within existing institutions; second, the idea of an independent black political party now under discussion within black leadership circles would soon lose all support.