

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

To Pres  
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OCT 23 1969

TOP SECRET - SENSITIVE

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

INFORMATION

October 20, 1969

FROM: Henry Kissinger *HK*

SUBJECT: Political Implication of Assassination of Somali President

We still lack detailed information on the murder of President Shermarke of Somali.

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- Despite tribal resentment toward the government's detente with Ethiopia and the rancor of the losers over a bitterly contested parliamentary election in March, the assassin -- a member of the Mobile Police Force -- appears to have been acting on his own.
- An army (anti-detente) takeover in the near future is not likely. The possibility remains, however, that there will be some inter-tribal fighting if the assassin turns out to be from a major tribal group opposed to Shermarke on ethnic rather than political grounds.
- The National Assembly will elect a new President within 30 days. All leading candidates are pro-Western, and would probably continue Somalia's ties with us as well as a conciliatory policy toward Ethiopia over the disputed border.

Prime Minister Egal, whom you saw last week, is now flying home from California. His return should have a general calming effect on the country.

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