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226. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon, Washington, September 29, 1972^{1 2}

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Washington, September 29, 1972

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 29, 1972

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR

- THE PRESIDENT

FROM

- HENRY A. KISSINGER

SUBJECT:

- Belgium's Reaction to the Burundi Situation

You asked what the Belgian reaction was to the upheaval in Burundi. As a result of our contacts with the Belgian Government on this matter, we find that:

—Belgian public opinion and the Belgian Parliament have been critical of continued assistance to Burundi as a result of the mass killing, causing Foreign Minister Harmel to inform the Parliament that Belgium “will have to adjust its cooperation.”

—Belgium, largely due to domestic pressure but also at U.S. and other foreign urging, stopped its flow of ammunition to Burundi. In July, the Government of Belgium told Burundi that formal bilateral teaching agreements would be required that would give Belgium the right to replace teachers and shift personnel as it requires and give the Belgian Ambassador the right to visit teachers throughout the country.

—Without agreement on these issues, the Belgian teaching mission would have to be recalled. Burundi will not agree to these seemingly modest requirements, believing that agreement will involve a loss of face.

—The Belgians also informed Burundi that the members of the Belgian military assistance team would have to be called back from their outlying posts and regrouped as a single unit which would have training as its sole purpose. This, too, has produced a negative reaction.

Negotiations are still going on. However, on September 22, Foreign Minister Harmel privately informed our Ambassador to Brussels that Belgium has decided to withdraw the military assistance team and that the teacher program might be terminated.

1. Source: National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials, NSC Files, Box 735, Country Files, Africa, Burundi, Vol. I. Secret; Sensitive. The memorandum is stamped, "The President has Seen." The President wrote adjacent to the subject line on page one, "What have we done?" Written at the top of page one is, "HK has seen." ↵
2. Kissinger summarized Belgium's reactions to the situation in Burundi