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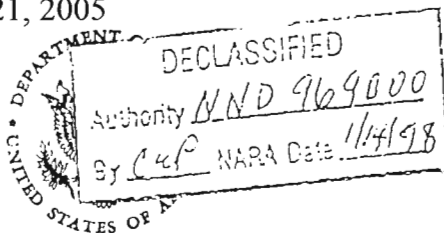
PA/HO Department of State

E.O. 12958, as amended

April 21, 2005

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

POL 27 BIAFRA-NIGERIA



Department of State

TELEGRAM

~~SECRET~~ 680

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ACTION AF 18

INFO EUR 15, IO 13, CIAE 00, DODE 00, JPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAF 00,
NSC 10, P 04, RSC 01, SP 02, SS 20, UCF 03, UPW 01, SCS 04, SCA 01, SR 01,
ORM 03, AID 28, ACDA 16, SSO 00, NSCE 00, USIE 00, RSR 01, /157 W

118178

P R 061500Z MAR 69
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5324
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USUN NEW YORK 880
USMISSION GENEVA

~~SECRET~~ LAGOS 2010

SUBJ: BOMBING OF CIVILIANS

REF: STATE 32362, LAGOS 1898 7

1. I TOLD COMMISSIONER EXTAFF ARIKPO THIS MORNING THAT I HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DISCUSS WITH HIM REPORTS OF NIGERIAN AIR FORCE (NAF) BOMBING OF CIVILIANS IN REBEL TERRITORY. I THEN MADE POINTS CONTAINED IN PARAGRAPH 5 STATE REFTEL AND PARAGRAPHS 2 AND 3 LAGOS REFTEL.

2. ARIKPO RESPONDED THAT UK HICOMER HAD DISCUSSED BOMBINGS WITH HEAD OF FMG ON MARCH 3, AND FMG HAD SINCE BEEN ASSEMBLING INFORMATION ON NAF OPERATIONS. FMG RECOGNIZED WITH DEEP REGRET THAT RECENT NAF OPERATIONS HAD RESULTED IN LARGE NUMBER CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. IN SOME INSTANCES THIS HAD BEEN UNAVOIDABLE AS CIVILIANS DESPITE WARNINGS REMAINED IN VICINITY MILITARY TARGETS. FMG WAS, HOWEVER, TIGHTENING CONTROLS OVER ALL NAF OPERATIONS TO MINIMIZE CIVILIAN CASUALTIES. ARIKPO SAID SPEAKING FOR FMG HE

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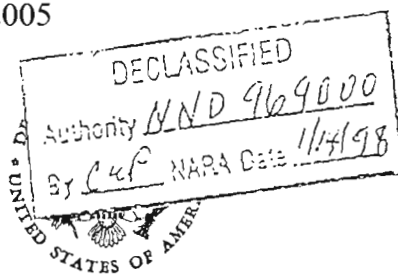
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ASSURED USG ONCE AGAIN THAT IT WAS NOT POLICY OR INTENT OF FMG TO HARM CIVILIANS.

3. ARIKPO EXPLAINED THAT SOME NAF AIRCRAFT WERE ASSIGNED FIRST DIVISION COMMANDER SHUWA AND THIRD DIVISION COMMANDER ADEKUNLE. IT HAD BEEN ASCERTAINED THAT SHUWA EXERCISED STRICT CONTROL OVER HIS AIRCRAFT AND RESTRICTED THEIR USE TO CLOSE SUPPORT OF GROUND FORCES. ADEKUNLE HOWEVER HAD BEEN USING HIS AIRCRAFT TO ATTACK MILITARY TARGETS REPORTED BY HIS INTELLIGENCE. ARIKPO INTIMATED ADEKUNLE'S INTELLIGENCE REPORTS NOT VERY GOOD, AND ADEKUNLE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO FOLLOW SHUWA'S PROCEDURES. ARIKPO EMPHASIZED THAT NAF OPERATIONS WOULD HENCEFORTH BE CLOSELY MONITORED FROM LAGOS.

4. RE ATTACK ON OZU ABAM. ADEKUNLE ADMITTED VILLAGE HAD BEEN ATTACKED BUT INSISTED THIS HAD BEEN DONE FEBRUARY 25, NOT ON FEBRUARY 26 DURING TRUCE PERIOD.

GP-4. MATHEWS