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By [Signature] NARA Date 3/19/98

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May 16, 1969

AIDE MEMOIRE

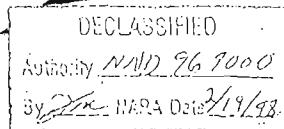
The Office of the Special Coordinator on Relief to the Civilian Victims of the Nigerian Civil War has the honor to present to His Excellency, the Ambassador of Nigeria, the following communication which is being presented simultaneously to his Government in Lagos.

"Dear General Gowon:

Recently one of the four C-97 aircraft sold by the USG to the Joint Church Aid relief group crashed while delivering relief supplies at Uli Airport. The plane suffered damage to such an extent that it will be impossible to return it to operational condition.

I have received a request from the JCA group for a C-97 to replace the destroyed aircraft. Since the original intent of the agreement with Joint Church Aid, which was communicated to your Government, was that the United States Government would maintain JCA's operational capacity at four C-97's, we have an obligation to provide JCA with a replacement for the lost plane.

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The decision to replace the destroyed C-97 is, of course, entirely separate from any decision concerning the two additional C-97's requested by JCA-USA in order to augment their present operational fleet. As you are aware, a decision on this matter is in abeyance because of my own strong conviction that a better solution to the relief problem can be found. At the invitation of Dr. Arikpo, I shall be coming to Lagos about the 23rd of this month to continue discussions on the Cross River and other surface corridors.

Let me again express my personal appreciation for the humane concern evinced by yourself and your Government for the welfare of all of the people of Nigeria.

With best wishes and sincere regards,

C. Clyde Ferguson, Jr."

Please accept the assurance of our highest consideration.

U/CF:SCS
5/16/69

Department of State

Clearances:
AF/W - Mr. Sherry (in draft)
S/S S/S/C

6/19/69 PM