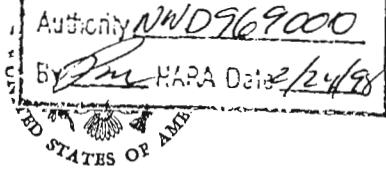


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SUBJ: US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS

Biafra.org

ACTION COPY

LAGOS, 6/11/69
6-7-69

1. LAGOS 6101 AND 6102 ARE LATEST IN SERIES EMBASSY AND IBADAN AND KADUNA CONSULATE REPORTS OF INCREASING NIGERIAN SUSPICION AND RESENTMENT OF WESTERN GOVERNMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS AND PEOPLES. IT IS APPARENT THAT THERE IS POSSIBILITY OF NEW CRISIS IN US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS WHICH COULD BE MORE SERIOUS THAN THOSE PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCED DURING PAST TWO YEARS. IT IS IRONIC THAT THIS UNHAPPY PROSPECT ARISES FROM FACT THAT USG AND FMG FACE SIMILAR PROBLEM -- I.E. BOTH MUST STRIKE BALANCE BETWEEN INTERNAL PRESSURES AND EXTERNAL POLITICAL REALITIES.

2. IN CASE OF FMG GOWON, ARIKPO AND OTHER MODERATES ARE AWARE THAT CHALLENGING ICRC, CLAIMING CONTROL OF ALL RELIEF OPERATIONS, REJECTING USG SPONSORED TEST VOYAGE ON CROSS RIVER WATER ROUTE AND THREATENING TO SHOOT DOWN NIGHT RELIEF FLIGHTS DAMAGES INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF FMG AND RISKS CREATING GREATER FOREIGN POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR REBELS. MODERATES ARE Equally AWARE THAT OVERWHELMING MAJORITY POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS NIGERIANS ARE CONVINCED THAT RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS ARE IN LEAGUE WITH REBELS, THAT RELIEF ACTIVITIES ARE PROLONGING CIVIL WAR AND THAT FMG TOO YIELDING TO FOREIGN PRESSURE. SOME WITHIN FMG FULLY SHARE THESE POPULAR VIEWS; OTHER POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS MEMBERS OF FMG SUCH AS AWOLOWO AND ENAHORO CANNOT RESIST TEMPTATION TO PANDER TO THESE ATTITUDES. FMG AS WHOLE HAS NOW REACHED DECISION THAT IT MUST GIVE PRIORITY TO ALLAYING INTERNAL CRITICISMS AND PRESSURES WHICH HAVE REACHED PITCH WHICH NO NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT COULD DISREGARD.

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By [Signature] HAPA Date 2/24/98



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3. IN CASE OF USG, AS SEEN FROM MY UNDOUBTEDLY DISTORTED LAGOSIAN PERSPECTIVE, BALANCE HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN TILTED TOWARD INTERNAL PRESSURE. DOMESTIC SYMPATHY FOR IBOS HAS LED US TO WAVER FROM USUAL POST-WORLD WAR II STANCE OF GIVING FIRM POLITICAL SUPPORT TO FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS AGAINST INTERNAL DISSIDENTS. WE HAVE BEEN PRONE TO ACCEPT AT FACE VALUE ALARMIST REPORTS OF CONDITIONS WITHIN REBEL TERRITORY EVEN THOUGH SUCH REPORTS HAVE LATER FREQUENTLY BEEN PROVED EXAGGERATED AND DESPITE FACT REBELS THEMSELVES DERIDE SUCH REPORTS WHEN IT SUITS THEIR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES TO DO SO. WE HAVE GIVEN MORAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT TO JCA RELIEF AIRLIFT WHICH FMG HAS REPEATEDLY AND CORRECTLY DENOUNCED AS ILLEGAL VIOLATION OF ITS AIRSPACE. BASIC FACT ABOUT THIS AIRLIFT IS THAT IT WOULD NEVER HAVE BEGUN HAD FMG AT TIME HAD CAPABILITY TO PROTECT ITS AIRSPACE.

4. OF GREAT PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE IS FACT THAT IN ORDER TO DEAL WITH INTERNAL PRESSURES USG HAS OFTEN CONDUCTED ITS BUSINESS WITH FMG BY PRESS STATEMENTS. LATEST EXAMPLE IS SECRETARY'S STATEMENT OF JULY 2 REVEALING PROPOSALS WE HAD SAME DAY PUT TO FMG OFFICIALLY. MOST NIGERIANS REGARDED THIS AS PRESSURE TACTIC AND IN CLIMATE OF OPINION PREVAILING HERE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR FMG TO AGREE TO PUBLICIZED PROPOSALS WHICH REQUIRED REVERSAL OF DECISIONS ALREADY TAKEN ON NIGHT AIRLIFT AND CROSS RIVER WATER ROUTE. ALTHOUGH FMG AND ITS OFFICIALS THEMSELVES FREQUENTLY TRY TO CONDUCT FOREIGN RELATIONS BY PRESS STATEMENTS, MORE SOPHISTICATED NIGERIANS EXCUSE THIS ON GROUNDS OF INEXPERIENCE. SAME NIGERIANS DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW DIPLOMATICALLY EXPERIENCED USG CAN DO SAME THING AND CONSEQUENTLY BELIEVE WELL REMEMBERED SERIES OF USG PRESS STATEMENTS BEGINNING WITH RELEASE RE FMG REQUEST TO BUY ARMS IN JULY 1967 MUST BE CALCULATED ATTEMPTS TO PRESSURE AND HUMILIATE FMG.

5. NO FEW NIGERIANS NOW READ SINISTER SIGNIFICANCE INTO ALMOST ANYTHING USG DOES. THUS ANNOUNCEMENT OF MY OWN TRANSFER BEFORE SELECTION OF SUCCESSOR IS BEING INTERPRETED AS EITHER ATTEMPT TO PRESSURE FMG OR FORERUNNER OF USG POLICY SHIFT. SIMILARLY, NIGERIANS CONSIDER ASSISTANT SECRETARY PALMER'S TRANSFER TO ANOTHER AFRICAN COUNTRY AS DEMOTION AND THEREFORE ANOTHER SIGN. OF CHANGING USG POLICY.

6. NIGERIANS ARE REACTING TO WHAT THEY SUSPECT USG IS DOING OR

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ABOUT TO DO TO THEM WITH SOME FEAR BUT MORE STUBBORNNESS AND RESENTMENT. MOST APPRECIATE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH USG BUT ARE PREPARED SACRIFICE THESE RELATIONS IF MAINTAINING THEM SEEMS IN THEIR VIEW LIKELY TO INTERFERE WITH PUTTING DOWN REBELLION.

7. I GATHER USG IS AGAIN REVIEWING ITS OWN BALANCE BETWEEN INTERNAL PRESSURE AND EXTERNAL POLITICAL REALITIES. I HOPE FOREGOING OBSERVATIONS WILL BE PUT ON SCALES.

GP-1

MATHEWS

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