



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

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Secretary The  
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TO: The Secretary  
THROUGH: The Under Secretary  
FROM: AF - David D. Newsom  
SUBJECT: Nigerian Relief--INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Dr. George Lythcott, who led the Nutritional Survey Mission in Nigeria in February and has very good, long-standing relationships with Nigerian health officials, is in Lagos again this week for a final, important consultation. His mission is to try to influence Nigerian health officials, on the basis of the February survey, to take certain further actions to meet the serious problems that may still lie ahead in the relief program.

Ambassador Trueheart has now expressed grave concern as to Dr. Lythcott's proceeding with these consultations even though it had been previously agreed between Dr. Lythcott and the Nigerians that he would return for a further discussion of the nutritional problem. Trueheart believes, despite Dr. Lythcott's status in Lagos, that further conversations along this line could seriously damage our already strained relationships with the Ministry of Health and that Lythcott's scheduled trip to the war-affected area is also inadvisable.

We have informed Ambassador Trueheart that we believe Dr. Lythcott should proceed with his mission as far as the Nigerians will permit and that the Embassy should support him in his efforts. There is serious concern here, in the White House and among the Public Health nutritionists who have been working on the Nigerian problem, that, unless the relief program is further strengthened, there may be substantial deterioration in the feeding situation in the East.

If Dr. Lythcott is unable to carry out the mission for which he has gone to Lagos, we will again have reached a point where Nigerian sensitivities and the concern felt here about the situation are in direct conflict. In that event, we may need to consult with you in a day or two on next steps.

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PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
April 21, 2005