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Authority NND 969000
By CAF NARA Date 3/10/98

Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION SS 70

INFO OCT 01, CCO 00, SSO 00, NSCE 00, DODE 00, CIAE 00, USIE 00, 1071 W
023968

P 051725Z AUG 69
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8210
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NY

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LIMDIS

SUBJECT: FMG RESPONSE NAVILLE PLAN

1. FMG RESPONSE MUCH AS EXPECTED AND REFLECTS AGAIN
UMBRAGE WHICH FMG HAS TAKEN AT WHAT IT CONSIDERS -
WITH SOME GOOD REASON - ICRC FAILURE GIVE CONSIDERATION
THEIR SOVEREIGNTY AND CONCERN IN MATTER RELIEF TO REBELS.
WE REGARD IT FORTUNATE TONE GOWON LETTER RELATIVELY MILD
GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES AND BELIEVE OUR AND UKHC INTERVENTION
DID HAVE SOME EFFECT.

2. BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL IF AMBASSADORS
FERGUSON AND TUBBY COULD MAKE CLEAR TO NAVILLE AND
FREYMOND OUR HOPE THAT ICRC CONTINUE SEEK SOLUTION TO
PRESENT RELIEF IMPASSE IN KEEPING WITH ITS HUMANITARIAN
MISSION. WE HOPE THEY WILL CHOOSE TO REGARD GOWON'S
RELATIVELY RESTRAINED REACTION TO ICRC NOTE AS
EVIDENCE THAT FMG HAS NOT WRITTEN OFF POSSIBILITY ICRC
FINDING SOLUTION PERMITTING DAYLIGHT FLIGHTS, AND
THAT ICRC CONSIDER DESIRABILITY NEW PERSONAL
MISSION TO LAGOS. BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO
STRESS THAT DESPITE BRICKBATS FROM BOTH SIDES, ICRC HAS
AND CAN CONTINUE TO PERFORM INVALUABLE RELIEF ROLE AS
ONLY NEUTRAL ORGANIZATION MANDATED WITH THIS FUNCTION.
IF ICRC WITHDRAWS, WE KNOW OF NO OTHER ORGANIZATION MORE

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POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES TO PERFORM VITAL RELIEF ROLE IN ENCLAVE AND CANNOT ENVISION ACCEPTANCE BY FMG OF JCA OR FRENCH RED CROSS RELIEF FLIGHTS, EITHER EXPLICIT OR TACIT. WE THINK NAVILLE COULD WELL BE ASKED CONSIDER WHO WOULD BENEFIT BY ICRC ABRUPT DEPARTURE FROM SCENE?

3. LETTER, IN SHORT, SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE TAKEN AS ABSOLUTE REJECTION. IT RAISES LOGICAL QUESTIONS WITH NAVILLE. DID YOU TAKE UP FMG PLAN WITH OJUKWU AND WHAT WERE RESULTS? HOW DOES FMG POLICY CONTRAVENE GENEVA CONVENTION? WHAT NEW FACTORS HAVE ARISEN SINCE LAST MEETING WHICH CAUSED CHANGE IN ATTITUDE TOWARD FMG POLICY? FMG RESTING ITS CASE IN EFFECT ON GENEVA CONVENTION WHICH THEY CLEARLY INTERPRET - AS DID NAVILLE IN CONVERSATION WITH US - AS ACCORDING MOST RIGHTS TO BLOCKING POWER.

4. BELIEVE BEST APPROACH ICRC IF THEY DESIRE STAY IN NIGERIAN RELIEF BUSINESS - WHICH SEEM IN DOUBT (GENEVA 2773) - IS TO SEND NAVILLE BACK TO LAGOS TO EXPLAIN SITUATION, HOPEFULLY WITH BIAFRAN EXPLANATION REJECTION FMG PLAN AND WITH FACTS AND FIGURES DEMONSTRATE WHY ICRC COULD NOT REPEAT NOT BEAR INCREASE IN COSTS INCURRED BY LAGOS TOUCHDOWNS. FAILING THIS, PROMPT INSTRUCTIONS ALONG ABOVE LINES TO BIGNAMI MIGHT HELP, ALTHOUGH HIS PROSPECTS SEEING GOWON - WHICH IMPORTANT IN THIS SITUATION - IS QUESTIONABLE.

5. DEPARTMENT MAY ALSO WISH CONSIDER EFFECT ICRC ATTITUDE AND FREYMOND TALK OF "REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT" ON FUTURE USEFULNESS ICRC, E.G. IN AFRICA AND ASIA. WE ALSO FAIL UNDERSTAND CONVICTION FREYMOND AND OTHERS THAT FMG PURSUING POLICY GENOCIDE. WE DO NOT REPEAT NOT RELIEVE THIS CASE AND ON HIS DEPARTURE LAGOS, NEITHER DID NAVILLE. GP-4.

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