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<SUBJ>SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 10 LAGOS 06695
PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, KPRP, NI, XF, US
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST
1. (CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT)

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SUMMARY

2. SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH THE MIDDLE EAST IS LARGELY PERIPHERAL TO NIGERIA'S PRINCIPAL FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS, MIDDLE EAST ISSUES GENERATE CONSIDERABLE INTEREST AND EMOTION IN NIGERIA. THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT LINKING NIGERIAN MUSLIMS TO MUSLIM ARABS AND THE CONSEQUENT FEAR THIS AROUSES AMONG NIGERIA'S NON-MUSLIMS PUTS NIGERIA'S BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST SQUARELY WITHIN THE WEB OF NIGERIA'S DOMESTIC NORTH-SOUTH, CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM POWER STRUGGLES.

3. INITIALLY AFTER INDEPENDENCE NIGERIAN LEADERS TRIED TO STRIKE A BALANCE IN NIGERIA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY AND RESISTED TAKING SIDES IN THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT.

WHILE NORTHERN MUSLIMS CREATED STRONG RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND FINANCIAL TIES WITH ARAB STATES, NON-MUSLIMS CREATED COMMERCIAL AND INVESTMENT TIES WITH ISRAEL AS A COUNTERWEIGHT.

4. HOWEVER, BY THE MID-1970'S NIGERIA'S POLICY HAD SHIFTED DECIDEDLY TOWARD THE ARABS. ISRAEL'S SUPPORT FOR BIAFRA DURING NIGERIA'S CIVIL WAR, ITS OCCUPATION OF AFRICAN LANDS AND THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, AND MORE RECENTLY ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA PROMPTED WIDESPREAD SUPPORT AMONG NIGERIANS FOR THEIR BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH ISRAEL. NIGERIA'S GROWING OIL

DEPENDENCY AND ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORGANIZATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC) ALONG WITH AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO ADOPT NON-ALIGNED POSITIONS ON THIRD WORLD ISSUES REINFORCED ITS SHIFT TO A PRO-ARAB MIDDLE EAST POLICY.

5. DESPITE STRONG SUPPORT THROUGHOUT NIGERIA'S SMALL BUT VOCAL FOREIGN POLICY ELITE FOR A PRO-ARAB, ANTI-ISRAELI MIDDLE EAST POLICY, COMMERCIAL TIES WITH ISRAEL CONTINUED TO EXPAND. PERIODICALLY THE QUESTION OF REESTABLISHING TIES WITH ISRAEL SURFACES, AND MAY HAVE GAINED SOME SUPPORT IN RECENT YEARS. PRESIDENT BABANGIDA MAY INITIALLY HAVE TOYED WITH THE IDEA OF ALTERING NIGERIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. BUT THE SUBSEQUENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEBACLE OVER NIGERIA'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC), PLACED SUCH THOUGHTS ON THE BACK BURNER.

6. CURRENTLY NIGERIA'S POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST IS STALEMATED. DOMESTIC CONSIDERATIONS WILL CONSTRAIN THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (FMG) FROM ALTERING NIGERIA'S CURRENT ALIGNMENT WITH ARAB COUNTRIES IN INTERNATIONAL FORA AND KEEP IT FROM DOING MORE THAN FLIRT WITH REESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. STRONG BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE APACE, ESPECIALLY IN THE CULTURAL/EDUCATIONAL REALM, AND

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ISRAELI COMPANIES WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE, AND EVEN EXPAND, THEIR BUSINESS VENTURES IN NIGERIA. ANY EFFORT TO CHANGE THE STATUS QUO WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY SET OFF A DOMESTIC UPROAR REMINISCENT OF THE CONTROVERSY THAT FOLLOWED THE FMG'S MISGUIDED EFFORTS TO JOIN THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) IN 1986, SERIOUSLY UNDERMINING THE BABANGIDA GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO ADDRESS DOMESTIC PRIORITIES TO WHICH IT ATTACHES MUCH GREATER IMPORTANCE. END SUMMARY.

FACTORS INFLUENCING NIGERIA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY

7. DOMESTIC REGIONAL/RELIGIOUS POLITICS. NIGERIA'S AFRICA CENTERED FOREIGN POLICY AND ITS CURRENT PREOCCUPATION WITH RELATIONS WITH WESTERN CREDITORS LEAVE LITTLE TIME FOR FOCUSING ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES. NEVERTHELESS, BECAUSE NIGERIA HAS A LARGE, COHESIVE MUSLIM POPULATION THAT IDENTIFIES WITH THE MUSLIM ARABS

OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AND BECAUSE NON-MUSLIMS FEEL THE NEED TO RESTRAIN THE INFLUENCE OF THE ARAB WORLD ON NIGERIA AS A WAY OF PRESERVING THEIR OWN IDENTITY, MIDDLE EAST ISSUES GENERATE CONSIDERABLE CONTROVERSY AND TEND TO BECOME ENMESHED WITH HIGHLY CHARGED ISSUES OF DOMESTIC POLICY.

8. NIGERIANS GENERALLY VIEW THE MIDDLE EAST AS A SOURCE OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, INVESTMENT AND TRADE. HOWEVER, A NIGERIAN'S REGIONAL AND RELIGIOUS ORIGIN AFFECTS HOW HE EXPECTS THESE INTERESTS TO BE PURSUED IN POLICY. NIGERIA'S MUSLIM COMMUNITY LOOKS TO THE ARAB COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT AS SOURCES OF ISLAMIC INSTRUCTORS, FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTING MOSQUES, AND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NIGERIAN STUDENTS. SAUDI ARABIA ASSUMES PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE AS THE DESTINATION FOR THE ANNUAL MUSLIM PILGRIMAGE, WHICH MORE THAN ONE MILLION NIGERIANS MADE BETWEEN 1965 AND THE PRESENT. NON-MUSLIMS, ESPECIALLY CHRISTIAN SOUTHERNERS, COUNTER BY LOOKING TO ISRAEL AS A SOURCE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE,

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INVESTMENT, TRADE, AND SCHOLARSHIPS. ON A SMALLER SCALE NIGERIA'S CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY VIEWS JERUSALEM AS THE CRADLE OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE DESTINATION OF CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS.

9. WITHIN THE DOMESTIC FRAMEWORK OF THESE DIVISIVE TENDENCIES, SEVERAL KEY FACTORS HAVE INFLUENCED THE DIRECTION OF NIGERIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST: ISRAEL'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF ARAB LANDS AND THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION; ISRAEL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SOUTH AFRICA; NIGERIA'S DEPENDENCE ON OIL; NIGERIA'S AFFINITY FOR SOLIDARITY WITH THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES ON THIRD WORLD ISSUES; AND TO A LESSER EXTENT THE LEGACY OF NIGERIA'S CIVIL WAR.

10. ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT. THE CULTURAL ALLEGIANCE NIGERIA'S MUSLIMS FEEL WITH THE LARGER MUSLIM WORLD LEADS THEM TO SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. ALTHOUGH THIS "BROTHERHOOD" IS THREATENING TO NIGERIA'S NON-MUSLIMS, PARTICULARLY SOUTHERN CHRISTIANS WHO INTERPRET IT AS A LEGION OF SUPPORT FOR MAKING NIGERIA AN ISLAMIC STATE, MANY NON-MUSLIMS WITHIN NIGERIA'S SMALL BUT VOCAL FOREIGN POLICY ESTABLISHMENT JOIN IN CONDEMNING ISRAEL'S REFUSAL TO END ITS OCCUPATION OF THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP AND REJECT ISRAEL'S INACTION ON THE QUESTION OF A PALESTINIAN HOMELAND. THIS COMBINATION OF FACTORS HAS DRAWN NIGERIA INTO THE PRO-ARAB, ANTI-ISRAELI CAMP IN ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 03 OF 10 LAGOS 06695 PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

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MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY.

11. ISRAEL'S SOUTH AFRICA CONNECTION. WITH THE ABOLITION OF APARTHEID THE PRINCIPLE OBJECTIVE OF NIGERIA'S AFRICA-CENTERED FOREIGN POLICY RHETORIC, ISRAEL'S CONTINUED INTERACTION WITH SOUTH AFRICA CONSTITUTES A MAJOR BARRIER TO IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. SINCE EGYPT HAS REESTABLISHED TIES WITH ISRAEL, ISRAEL'S SOUTH AFRICA CONNECTION HAS BECOME THE

CENTERPIECE OF THE NIGERIAN ARGUMENT AGAINST RESTORING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE RESPONSE IN NIGERIA TO ISRAEL'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO REDUCE ITS COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

12. NIGERIA'S OIL DEPENDENCY. THE OIL BOOM OF THE 1970'S CAST NIGERIA'S LOT WITH THE ARAB OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST. BY JOINING OPEC IN 1971, NIGERIA TIED ITS ECONOMIC FORTUNES TO THE OIL POLITICS OF THE MIDDLE EAST. TO ENHANCE ITS CREDIBILITY WITHIN OPEC, IT BECAME INCUMBENT ON NIGERIA TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR ARAB COUNTRIES ON POLITICAL AS WELL AS ECONOMIC ISSUES BOTH WITHIN OPEC AND IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA.

13. NON-ALIGNED SOLIDARITY. BY THE EARLY 1970'S, NIGERIA'S VISION OF ITSELF AS A KEY NON-ALIGNED LEADER IN AFRICA LED IT TO IDENTIFY INCREASINGLY WITH POSITIONS OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) IN ORDER TO RETAIN ITS OWN CREDIBILITY AND CLAIM TO THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP. BY GIVING ITS SUPPORT TO ARAB POSITIONS ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES, NIGERIA SOUGHT ARAB SUPPORT ON MATTERS OF KEY IMPORTANCE TO NIGERIA, NAMELY ON ANTI-APARTHEID QUESTIONS.

14. CIVIL WAR LEGACY. NIGERIA'S LEADERS HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THAT ISRAEL SUPPORTED BIAFRA DURING NIGERIA'S CIVIL WAR. THIS SOURD MANY NIGERIANS ON ISRAEL BY THE LATE 1960'S AND MADE IT EASIER FOR NIGERIA'S POLICY TO TILT TOWARD THE ARABS IN THE 1970'S.

SEEKING BALANCE

15. DURING THE 1950'S AND INTO THE EARLY YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE, NIGERIA'S REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS HAD THE AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS SO LONG AS THEIR ACTIONS DID NOT CONTRADICT NATIONAL POLICY. THE PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN REGION, AHMADU BELLO, THE POWERFUL SARDAUNA OF SOKOTO, USED THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE STRONG RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LINKS BETWEEN NORTHERN NIGERIA AND ARAB COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT. AT THE SAME TIME HE EXPRESSED OVERT HOSTILITY TOWARD ISRAEL. WHEN ISRAEL OFFERED A THREE MILLION POUND LOAN TO NIGERIA IN 1960, BELLO DENOUNCED IT AND DECLARED HE WOULD ACCEPT NO PART OF IT FOR THE NORTH. SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH BELLO IS QUOTED AS SAYING "ISRAEL DOES NOT EXIST."

16. DESPITE STRONG OBJECTIONS FROM NORTHERN MUSLIMS, A COALITION OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE WESTERN REGION, THE EASTERN REGION AND THE MIDDLE BELT PUSHED RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL THROUGH THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SOON AFTER INDEPENDENCE. THOSE FAVORING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL SAW RECOGNITION AS A WAY OF COUNTERING THE STRONG RELATIONSHIP NIGERIA'S MUSLIM NORTH HAD ALREADY ESTABLISHED WITH ARAB COUNTRIES. IT WAS DEMONSTRATING NIGERIA'S NON-ALIGNMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. TIES WITH ISRAEL OFFERED THE PROSPECT OF ISRAELI

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ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. RELIGION, THOUGH NOT THE CENTRAL ISSUE, WAS AN ELEMENT MOTIVATING THE PREDOMINANTLY CHRISTIAN COALITION.

17. THE GOVERNMENT NEVERTHELESS MOVED CAUTIOUSLY. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL OPENED A DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN LAGOS ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, NIGERIA NEVER OPENED A MISSION IN TEL AVIV. FROM THE BEGINNING THE GOVERNMENT OPTED TO MAINTAIN ONLY AN INTEREST SECTION IN THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN ISRAEL. THIS WAS A DELIBERATE DECISION TO AVOID MUSLIM CHARGES OF COZYING UP TO THE "ENEMY."

18. ISRAEL PROCEEDED TO ESTABLISH AN IMPORTANT PRESENCE IN NIGERIA. ISRAELI COMPANIES ESTABLISHED THEMSELVES IN THE SOUTHERN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. MANY HAVE CONTINUED TO EXPAND TO THE PRESENT. ONE, SOLEL BONEH, IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED FOR ITS CONSTRUCTION OF MAJOR ROADS, PARTICULARLY IN THE OLD WESTERN REGION. DIZENGOFF IS A PROMINENT RETAIL AND WHOLESALE TRADING COMPANY DEALING IN PHARMACEUTICALS, BUILDING MATERIALS, AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. SOME COMPANIES WENT INTO JOINT COMMERCIAL VENTURES WITH VARIOUS STATE GOVERNMENTS IN THE SOUTH, IN PARTICULAR THE WESTERN REGION GOVERNMENT. ISRAEL ALSO LAUNCHED AID PROJECTS IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE SOUTH, ESPECIALLY AGRICULTURAL AND WATER PROJECTS. AFTER THE DEATH OF THE SARDAUNA AND THE DIVISION OF THE FORMER NORTHERN REGION INTO SIX STATES, SMALL ISRAELI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PROJECTS REACHED THE PREDOMINANTLY NON-MUSLIM AREAS OF THE NORTH. BETWEEN 1960 AND 1971 OVER 1,000 NIGERIANS TRAINED IN ISRAEL AND MORE THAN 300 ISRAELI TECHNICIANS WORKED IN NIGERIA. BY 1968 THE VOLUME OF NIGERIA'S TRADE WITH ISRAEL SURPASSED ITS TRADE WITH EGYPT.

TILT TOWARD THE ARABS

19. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL MAINTAINED DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THROUGHOUT THE CIVIL WAR, IT WAS WIDELY SUSPECTED THAT ISRAEL WAS FUNNELING AID--MORAL

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SUPPORT AND MILITARY TRAINING--TO BIAFRA. THE EXTENT OF ISRAEL'S SUPPORT FOR BIAFRA WAS NEVER DOCUMENTED. BUT AT THE END OF THE WAR, ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER ABBA EBAN CONFIRMED NIGERIAN SUSPICIONS WHEN HE LAMENTED THE COLLAPSE OF BIAFRA AND BLAMED IT IN PART ON THE FAILURE OF OTHER COUNTRIES TO SUPPORT BIAFRA AS ISRAEL HAD. THIS ADMISSION SERIOUSLY DAMAGED ISRAEL'S STANDING IN NIGERIA AND LEFT LITTLE RESERVOIR OF SYMPATHY FOR ISRAEL AMONG NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THEN HEAD OF STATE GENERAL GOWON, A CHRISTIAN. IT ALSO LEFT A HERITAGE OF PRO-ISRAELI SENTIMENT AMONG THE IBOS OF EASTERN NIGERIA.

20. ISRAEL'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF THE SINAI FOLLOWING THE 1967 SIX-DAY WAR AND THE RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES IN 1973 ACCELERATED NIGERIA'S TILT TOWARD THE ARAB STATES. NIGERIA RESISTED MOUNTING PRESSURES WITHIN THE OAU FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO INTENSIFY SUPPORT FOR ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISOLATE ISRAEL UNTIL ALL BUT TEN OAU MEMBERS HAD BROKEN RELATIONS IN OCTOBER 1973. NIGERIA'S HEAD OF STATE GOWON, THEN CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU, FINALLY DETERMINED THAT NIGERIA COULD NOT AFFORD TO BE ISOLATED ON THE ISRAELI ISSUE IF IT HOPED

TO RETAIN CREDIBILITY WITHIN THE OAU AND ARAB SUPPORT FOR ITS REGIONAL INITIATIVES, ESPECIALLY ITS PRIORITY POLICY CONCERN, THE ELIMINATION OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA. NIGERIA BROKE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL ON OCTOBER 25, 1973, PROMPTED PRIMARILY BY MULTILATERAL ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 05 OF 10 LAGOS 06695 PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

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SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST CONSIDERATIONS, WITHOUT ANY HINT OF DOMESTIC BACKLASH. NIGERIANS WERE UNITED IN THEIR CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF EGYPTIAN TERRITORY.

21. ABOUT THE SAME TIME, NIGERIA'S LINK WITH THE MIDDLE EAST ARAB COUNTRIES THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION OF PETROLEUM EXPORTING COUNTRIES (OPEC) BECAME A CRUCIAL FEATURE OF NIGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY. THE OIL BOOM OF THE EARLY 1970'S AND THE CONSEQUENT SHIFT IN NIGERIA'S ECONOMY FROM AN AGRICULTURAL BASE TO OIL DEPENDENCY, TIED NIGERIA'S FORTUNES TO THE PRICE OF PETROLEUM AND TO THE OIL POLITICS OF THE ARAB OIL-PRODUCING STATES. WITH ITS ECONOMIC INTERESTS TO A LARGE EXTENT COINCIDENT WITH THOSE OF THE ARAB OPEC COUNTRIES, IT BECAME LOGICAL FOR NIGERIA TO SUPPORT THE ARAB COUNTRIES ON POLITICAL ISSUES AS WELL AS ON ECONOMIC ONES.

22. IN 1966 NIGERIA WAS STILL STEERING A MIDDLE COURSE ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES AT THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY. IN THAT YEAR NIGERIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE UN STRONGLY CONDEMNED ARAB PROVOCATION OF ISRAEL AND A MONTH LATER RESOUNDINGLY CONDEMNED AN ISRAELI RAID ON JORDAN. BY THE LATE 1960'S AND EARLY 1970'S, HOWEVER, NIGERIA BEGAN INCREASINGLY TO TAKE PRO-ARAB STANCES AT THE UN AND TO MAKE STRIDENT ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA. AFTER 1975 NIGERIA'S SUPPORT FOR PRO-ARAB RESOLUTIONS AT THE UN REACHED NEARLY 100 PERCENT, ACCORDING TO A 1985 STUDY BY A SENIOR RESEARCHER AT THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS.

23. SAUDI ARABIA BECAME ONE OF NIGERIA'S MOST IMPORTANT BILATERAL ARAB PARTNERS, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE HAJJ, OPEC, AND FINANCING OF MUSLIM ACTIVITIES. BETWEEN 1965 AND 1985 APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION NIGERIANS MADE THE HAJJ TO MECCA, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL FIGURES OF THE

NIGERIAN PILGRIMS BOARD. REPORTEDLY ABOUT 30,000 NIGERIANS CURRENTLY RESIDE PERMANENTLY IN SAUDI ARABIA. IN 1983, SAUDI ARABIA LOANED THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT US DOLLARS 400 MILLION. THERE ARE NO RECORDS OF THE AMOUNT OF PRIVATE OR GOVERNMENT FUNDS CHanneled FROM SAUDI ARABIA TO RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA, BUT IT IS EVIDENTLY CONSIDERABLE. SAUDIS ARE FINANCING CONSTRUCTION OF THE ENORMOUS GOLD-DOMED MOSQUE IN ABUJA. THEY HAVE REPORTEDLY HAD A HAND IN FINANCING NEW MOSQUES OPENED WITHIN THE LAST YEAR ON SEVERAL SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES, INCLUDING THOSE OF LAGOS AND IBADAN. CHRISTIAN ALLEGATIONS POINT TO SAUDI FINANCING FOR MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE JAMA'ATU NASRIL ISLAM (JNI). SAUDI TEACHERS COME TO NIGERIA AND NIGERIAN STUDENTS STUDY ON SCHOLARSHIPS IN SAUDI

ARABIA. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS EXCHANGE VISITS FREQUENTLY. A NIGERIAN DELEGATION LED BY FORMER UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVE MAITAMA SULE, A NORTHERN MUSLIM, VISITED SAUDI ARABIA SHORTLY AFTER BABANGIDA CAME TO POWER. SHEIKH YAMANI, SAUDI OIL MINISTER FOR MANY YEARS, CAME TO NIGERIA ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS. TRADE WITH SAUDI ARABIA, ALTHOUGH LOW, REMAINS HIGHER THAN WITH MOST ARAB COUNTRIES. SAUDI ARABIA THIS YEAR PICKED SHEIKH GUMMI, CONTROVERSIAL NIGERIAN ISLAMIC SCHOLAR, TO RECEIVE ITS ANNUAL KING FAISAL AWARD FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAM.

24. EGYPT IS THE OTHER MIDDLE EASTERN ARAB COUNTRY THAT HAS CONSIDERABLE SIGNIFICANCE FOR NIGERIA. TIES ARE PRIMARILY CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS IN NATURE WITH NIGERIA RECEIVING ISLAMIC TEACHERS, AND SCHOLARSHIPS. SOME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS INCLUDED, ESPECIALLY ENGINEERS AND MARITIME PILOTS FOR THE NIGERIAN PORT AUTHORITY AND ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 06 OF 10 LAGOS 06695 PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

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SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST THE MARITIME COLLEGE. IN ADDITION, A MILITARY COOPERATION AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR SOME MILITARY EXCHANGES. NIGERIA PURCHASES SOME GOODS FROM EGYPT, BUT EGYPT PURCHASES VIRTUALLY NOTHING IN RETURN. FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS GHALI HAS VISITED NIGERIA ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

25. TIES WITH ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALIST COUNTRIES SUCH AS LIBYA AND IRAN REMAIN CORRECT BUT NOT SO CORDIAL, DESPITE MUSLIM AFFINITIES. SOME MUSLIM GOVERNMENT LEADERS AS WELL AS SOME MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADERS WORRY ABOUT THE IMPACT FUNDAMENTALIST TEACHINGS EXPORTED BY LIBYA AND IRAN MIGHT HAVE ON THEIR ABILITY TO RETAIN CONTROL OF AN ALREADY FRACTIOUS MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN NIGERIA. THUS, THEY SEEK TO LIMIT LIBYAN AND IRANIAN ACTIVITY AMONG NIGERIA'S MUSLIMS. REPORTS SURFACE FROM TIME TO TIME ABOUT NIGERIANS GOING TO IRAN AND LIBYA FOR TRAINING AND RETURNING TO NIGERIA ONLY TO STIR UP TROUBLE. IRANIAN LITERATURE IS AVAILABLE FROM TIME TO TIME ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES. DELEGATIONS OF MUSLIMS HAVE ATTENDED ISLAMIC CALL SOCIETY CONFERENCES IN TRIPOLI. JOURNALISTS FROM THE KANO-BASED DAILY TRIUMPH WHO VISITED BOTH IRAN AND LIBYA HAVE WRITTEN FAVORABLE REPORTS ON THESE COUNTRIES AND THEIR POLICIES. JUST AS SAUDI ARABIA PUMPS MONEY INTO RELIGIOUS CAUSES IN NIGERIA, LIBYA AND IRAN ARE THOUGHT TO DO LIKEWISE, BUT ON A SMALLER SCALE. CHRISTIANS REGULARLY ALLEGE THAT JNI AND THE SUPREME ISLAMIC COUNCIL RECEIVE LIBYAN FUNDS FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES. MUSLIMS REGULARLY COUNTER, WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, THAT THEY WILL TAKE SUPPORT FROM ANYWHERE BUT THAT THE SOURCE WILL NOT AFFECT THE DIRECTION OF THEIR ACTIVITIES. ONE UNIVERSITY

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VICE-CHANCELLOR ACKNOWLEDGED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT MUSLIM ACTIVITIES DID RECEIVE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM UNSPECIFIED FOREIGN SOURCES BUT CONTENDED THAT NIGERIAN ISLAM IS STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST OUTSIDE INFLUENCES.

FLIRTING WITH ISRAEL

26. (C) DESPITE THE 1973 RUPTURE IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND THE DECIDEDLY PRO-ARAB STANCE OF NIGERIA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY SINCE THAT TIME, NIGERIA HAS NEVER CUT ITSELF OFF COMPLETELY FROM ISRAELI COMMERCE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. INDEED, ISRAEL'S INVOLVEMENT WITH NIGERIA HAS GROWN OVER THE YEARS. BY 1983 MORE THAN 40 ISRAELI COMPANIES WERE ACTIVE IN NIGERIA. IN 1985 THE ISRAELI COMMUNITY IN NIGERIA REPORTEDLY NUMBERED 2,000. ACCORDING TO A RESEARCHER AT THE NIGERIAN INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, NIGERIA ALSO MAINTAINS A SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. PRIVATELY HE CITES AS EVIDENCE THE 1984 INSTANCE OF THE DIKKO KIDNAPPING ATTEMPT FOR WHICH TWO ISRAELIS WERE CONVICTED ALONG WITH A NIGERIAN AND NOTES THAT THEN HEAD OF THE NIGERIAN SECURITY ORGANIZATION RAFINDADI ALLEGEDLY HAD DEVELOPED CLOSE LINKS TO ISRAELI SECURITY AGENTS. IN A PUBLISHED PAPER HE NOTES THAT NIGERIA PURCHASED EQUIPMENT FROM ISRAEL IN 1983 FOR ITS SECURITY FORCES.

26. NEVERTHELESS, NIGERIA HAS BALKED AT RESTORING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL EVEN THOUGH EGYPT REESTABLISHED RELATIONS IN 1980 AND SEVERAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUBSEQUENTLY FOLLOWED SUIT. ISRAEL'S CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF ARAB TERRITORY, ITS TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS, AND THE MEMORY OF ITS SUPPORT FOR BIAFRA CONTINUE TO ANTAGONIZE BOTH MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS. MORE IMPORTANTLY, ISRAEL'S TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA PUT

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PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, KPRP, NI, XF, US

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST
ISRAEL IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO NIGERIA'S GOAL OF ENDING APARTHEID, ONE OF THE FEW NATIONAL OBJECTIVES THAT ALL NIGERIANS SUPPORT UNRESERVEDLY.

27. PERIODICALLY, HOWEVER, THE DEBATE OVER RESTORATION OF TIES WITH ISRAEL SURFACES IN NIGERIA'S POLITICAL, PRESS AND ACADEMIC CIRCLES. IN RECENT YEARS, THE ARGUMENT FAVORING REESTABLISHING RELATIONS APPEARS TO BE GAINING SYMPATHY. ADVOCATES ARGUE THAT RESTORATION OF TIES IS IN NIGERIA'S NATIONAL INTEREST. NIGERIA WILL BENEFIT ECONOMICALLY FROM ISRAELI INVESTMENT AND THE CONSEQUENT EXPANSION OF ITS BUSINESS SECTOR. POLITICAL AND SECURITY BENEFITS WILL ACCRUE AS WELL. GOOD RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL WILL ENHANCE RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS THE UNITED STATES. IF EGYPT CAN REESTABLISH TIES WITH ISRAEL, THEN SURELY NIGERIA CAN. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL'S TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA ARE AN ANATHEMA, THEY ARE IRRELEVANT TO NIGERIA'S BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. DOESN'T NIGERIA MAINTAIN RELATIONS WITH MANY COUNTRIES THAT DO BUSINESS WITH SOUTH AFRICA?

28. PRO-ARABISTS COUNTER THAT RESTORATION OF TIES WITH ISRAEL WILL ADVERSELY AFFECT NIGERIA'S RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES. THEY ARGUE THAT THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO BE GAINED BY RETAINING FAVORABLE RELATIONS WITH THE OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES FAR OUTWEIGH ANYTHING ISRAEL COULD OFFER. AS ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL TIES WITH

ISRAEL HAVE CONTINUED AND IN FACT INCREASED DESPITE THE

1973 BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, THERE IS LITTLE TO GAIN BY CHANGING THE STATUS QUO AND MUCH TO LOSE BY OFFENDING ARAB COUNTRIES.

29. THESE ARGUMENTS ARE REPEATED EACH TIME THE ISSUE OF RESUMING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL IS DEBATED. POLITICIANS IN SEVERAL SOUTHERN STATES CONDUCTED THIS DEBATE IN STATE HOUSES OF ASSEMBLY DURING THE LAST CIVILIAN ERA. MOTIONS TO REESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH ISRAEL WERE DEFEATED IN LAGOS AND KWARA STATES BUT WERE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN IMO AND ONDO STATES. A MAY 1982 MOTION PROPOSED IN THE FEDERAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BY MEMBERS OF THE WESTERN-BASED UPN AND THE EASTERN-BASED NPP WAS EVENTUALLY SUSPENDED. PRESIDENT SHAGARI, A NORTHERN MUSLIM, OPPOSED RESTORING RELATIONS AS LONG AS ISRAEL CONTINUED TO OCCUPY ARAB LANDS.

30. IN AUGUST 1984, DURING THE BUHARI REGIME, TWO LEADING TRADITIONAL RULERS--THE EMIR OF KANO, A NORTHERN MUSLIM, AND THE OONI OF IFE, A SOUTHERN YORUBA CHRISTIAN--TOGETHER MADE WHAT WAS TERMED A "PRIVATE" VISIT TO ISRAEL. THEIR VISIT AND TALKS WITH ISRAELI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS RECEIVED WIDESPREAD NEGATIVE PUBLICITY IN NIGERIA, ALTHOUGH THE SUBSTANCE OF THEIR TALKS WAS NEVER REVEALED. PRESS SPECULATION AT THE TIME LINKED THE VISIT VARIOUSLY WITH RECRUITMENT OF ISRAELI AGRICULTURAL EXPERTS AND A POSSIBLE SECRET MESSAGE FROM THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT TO THE GOI REGARDING THE DIKKO KIDNAPPING ATTEMPT. EMBASSY REPORTING NOTED THAT IF THE EMIR/OONI VISIT TO ISRAEL HAD THE SECRET BLESSING OF THE FMG, THE TWO MEN WERE FORCED TO PAY A HIGH PRICE FOR THE OVERLY PUBLIC WELCOME ACCORDED THEM BY THE GOI. BOTH WERE SUSPENDED FOR SIX MONTHS BY THEIR STATE GOVERNORS FROM THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THEIR RESPECTIVE STATE COUNCILS OF TRADITIONAL RULERS AND CONFINED TO THEIR HOME CITIES. THE NEED FOR SUCH A STRONG REACTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT, WHETHER THE VISIT WAS SANCTIONED OR NOT, CLEARLY SHOWED THAT THE COUNTRY WAS NOT YET READY TO TAKE THE STEP OF REESTABLISHING TIES WITH ISRAEL.

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PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, KPRP, NI, XF, US

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST

31. IN EARLY 1986, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA APPARENTLY TOYED WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF REESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC TIES. THE TIME SEEMED PROPITIOUS. BABANGIDA WAS RIDING A WAVE OF POPULARITY IN THE WAKE OF A FOILED COUP ATTEMPT. HE WAS SETTING A MODERATE COURSE IN FOREIGN POLICY.

FOREIGN MINISTER AKINYEMI, A CHRISTIAN, HAD LONG BEEN AN ADVOCATE OF RESTORING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL (ALTHOUGH HE HAD EQUIVOCATED MORE RECENTLY OVER THE QUESTION OF ISRAEL'S TIES WITH SOUTH AFRICA). A NEWSPAPER REPORT OF A VISIT BY THE THEN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF ISRAEL'S MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DAVID KIMCHE, NEVER CONFIRMED BY EITHER THE FMG OR THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, CAUSED LITTLE STIR AT THE TIME.

32. THOUGHTS OF REESTABLISHING RELATIONS WERE QUICKLY OVERSHADOWED BY SUBSEQUENT EVENTS. PRESIDENT

BABANGIDA'S MISGUIDED DECISION TO CHANGE NIGERIA'S STATUS AT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) FROM OBSERVER TO FULL MEMBER WAS JUST COMING TO LIGHT. IN THE ENSUING SIX MONTHS RELIGIOUS TENSIONS BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS REACHED A FEVER PITCH. MANY NIGERIANS FEARED VIOLENCE REMINISCENT OF LEBANON OR IRELAND MIGHT ERUPT. GOVERNMENT WAS PARALYZED UNTIL IT COULD SET THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE ASIDE THROUGH A DELIBERATE POLICY OF AMBIGUITY THAT ALLOWED BOTH MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS TO BELIEVE THAT THE CONTROVERSY HAD BEEN

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SETTLED IN THEIR FAVOR. WHATEVER PROGRESS MAY HAVE BEEN MADE TOWARD REESTABLISHING FORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN NIGERIA AND ISRAEL HAS BEEN PUT ON HOLD.

STALEMATED

33. THE OIC DEBACLE UNDERScoreD THE DOMESTIC LIABILITIES CONNECTED WITH NIGERIA'S CONDUCT OF ITS RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB WORLD, ESPECIALLY WHEN A PARTICULAR MOVE CAN BE INTERPRETED TO BE IN THE INTERESTS OF ONE PART OF THE COUNTRY AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER. JOINING THE OIC WAS NEVER VIEWED AS A MIDDLE EAST POLICY QUESTION. IT WAS ALWAYS DEBATED AS A DOMESTIC ISSUE IN TERMS OF ADVANTAGES FOR MUSLIMS VERSUS DISADVANTAGES FOR CHRISTIANS. SIMILARLY, WERE THERE TO BE A PUBLIC DEBATE OVER WHETHER TO WITHDRAW FROM OPEC, IT COULD NEVER BE CONFINED TO ECONOMIC ISSUES. MANY MUSLIMS WOULD OBJECT TO LEAVING THE OIL CARTEL SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF THE STATEMENT SUCH A MOVE WOULD MAKE ABOUT NIGERIA'S SOLIDARITY WITH THE MUSLIM WORLD.

34. IN THIS DOMESTIC CONTEXT THE QUESTION OF RESTORING RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL BECOMES VERY DELICATE. WITH SEVERAL NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES ALREADY HAVING RESUMED RELATIONS--TOGO RECENTLY JOINED CAMEROON AND COTE D'IVOIRE --PRESSURE UNDOUBTEDLY IS MOUNTING FOR NIGERIA TO FOLLOW SUIT. INDEED, INTERNATIONAL PRESS REPORTS HINT AT THE LIKELIHOOD. HOWEVER, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT NIGERIA CAN AFFORD TO TAKE ANY SUCH STEP ANY TIME SOON. EVEN CHRISTIANS, SOME OF WHOM PUSHED FOR BABANGIDA TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AS THE QUID PRO QUO FOR NIGERIA'S OIC MEMBERSHIP, APPEAR TO HAVE BACKED OFF BOTH IN RECOGNITION OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE ISSUE AND BECAUSE THEY PREFER TO PRETEND THAT NIGERIA IS NOT AN OIC MEMBER. SOME NIGERIAN ANALYSTS WHO BELIEVE BABANGIDA MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE THIS BOLD STEP EARLY IN HIS ADMINISTRATION, ADMIT THE POTENTIAL SUCH A MOVE WOULD HAVE FOR CREATING A BACKLASH THAT COULD SERIOUSLY JEOPARDIZE THE BABANGIDA GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO DEAL WITH HIGHER PRIORITY ISSUES.

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PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

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5-&: PREL, KRP, NI, XF, US

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST

35. THEREFORE, THE GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ARTICULATE AN ANODYNE MIDDLE EAST POLICY THAT TAKES THAT PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE. IN NOVEMBER 1985, IN HIS ONLY

MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH SINCE TAKING POWER, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA TOUCHED ONLY BRIEFLY ON THE MIDDLE EAST. HE EXPRESSED NIGERIA'S CONCERN FOR THE CONFLICTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND CALLED FOR PEACEFUL SETTLEMENTS WITHIN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORKS, REDEDICATED NIGERIA TO SUPPORT FOR UN RESOLUTION 242 GUARANTEEING THE RIGHTS OF BOTH ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS IN THE UNRESOLVED ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT, AND CALLED FOR A NEGOTIATED END TO THE IRAN/IRAQ CONFLICT THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE ARAB LEAGUE AND THE UNITED NATIONS. HE ALSO RECOMMITTED NIGERIA TO MEMBERSHIP IN OPEC.

36. FOREIGN MINISTER AKINYEI ECHOED THESE POLICY POSITIONS IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH REPORTERS OF THE SUNDAY CONCORD IN APRIL 1986. BUT HE WENT FURTHER TO ADMIT TO A SOFTENING OF NIGERIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL. IN RESPONSE TO A REPORTER'S QUESTION, HE AGREED THAT HIS 1985 UN SPEECH AND BABANGIDA'S FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH THAT NOVEMBER HAD DELIBERATELY AVOIDED THE STRIDENT

RHETORIC OF THE PAST. HE ASSERTED THAT "THROWING STONES" WOULD NOT HELP BRING ABOUT PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME HE CALLED ON ISRAEL TO CHANGE ITS POLICY TOWARD SOUTH AFRICA, SIGNALING THAT SUCH A CHANGE WOULD OPEN THE WAY FOR NIGERIA TO ALTER ITS POLICY TOWARD ISRAEL.

37. DESPITE THIS ANODYNE PUBLIC POLICY, TENSIONS NEVERTHELESS PERSIST THAT WOULD MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO ALTER SIGNIFICANTLY NIGERIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE MIDDLE EAST A RISK WITH A DOMESTIC PRICE THAT COULD OUTWEIGH INTERNATIONAL GAINS. CHRISTIAN LEADERS HAVE EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS FEARS THAT NIGERIA HAS RECENTLY BEEN INCREASING ITS DEALINGS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES, CITING INCREASED VISITS OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND WORRY THAT THIS WILL LEAD TO THE DEMISE OF CHRISTIANITY IN NIGERIA. MUSLIMS ON THE OTHER HAND THOROUGHLY DISTRUST AKINYEI. A CHRISTIAN KNOWN TO FAVOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THEY WORRY THAT HE WILL JEOPARDIZE NIGERIA'S RELATIONS WITH ARAB STATES. AS LONG AS DOMESTIC RELIGIOUS AND REGIONAL TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH, AS THEY HAVE BEEN FOR THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF, THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT WILL BE SEVERELY RESTRICTED IN ITS FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES.

IMPLICATIONS FOR US POLICY

38. UNLESS THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH IN THE ARAB/ISRAELI CONFLICT OR A DRAMATIC CHANGE IN NIGERIA'S PERCEPTION OF ISRAEL AS AN ALLY OF SOUTH AFRICA, NIGERIA WILL PURSUE A PRO-ARAB POLICY TOWARD THE MIDDLE EAST WHILE FLIRTING WITH RESTORING DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH ISRAEL. NIGERIA WILL CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA AGAINST ISRAEL, THOUGH PERHAPS WITH LESS AND LESS STRIDENCY. AND IT WILL CONTINUE TO VOTE WITH NON-ALIGNED POSITIONS THAT FAVOR ARAB COUNTRIES AT THE EXPENSE OF ISRAEL AT THE UNGA AND ELSEWHERE. WHILE NIGERIA MAY CONTINUE TO VOICE OBJECTIONS IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH AMERICAN DIPLOMATS AGAINST "NAME-CALLING" IN SUCH RESOLUTIONS, IT WILL NOT TAKE THE LEAD IN SEEKING TO ELIMINATE OR EVEN MODERATE SUCH LANGUAGE. AT THE SAME TIME, NIGERIA WILL PROMOTE WHAT IT BELIEVES TO BE VEHICLES FOR PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF

THE VARIOUS CONFLICTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. IN THIS CONTEXT NIGERIA HAS LONG SUPPORTED A UN-SPONSORED MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE.

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PARIS FOR POPE; LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, KRP, NI, XF, US

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN FOREIGN POLICY: THE MIDDLE EAST

39. THE BITTER EXPERIENCE OF THE OIC CONTROVERSY AND THE SHOCK OF THE MORE RECENT RELIGIOUS DISTURBANCES IN THE NORTH UNDERLINE THE WISDOM OF AMBIGUITY IN ANY NIGERIAN POLICY, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL, THAT SCRATCHES THE DOMESTIC MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN POLITICAL DICHOTOMY. WHILE NORTHERN MUSLIMS CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR EXPANDED RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE OIC, SOUTHERN CHRISTIANS WILL URGE EXPANDED TIES AND PERHAPS RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THE GOVERNMENT WILL IN ALL PROBABILITY TRY TO WALK THE TIGHTROPE BETWEEN, KEEPING BOTH GROUPS REASONABLY SATISFIED WITHOUT BECOMING BEHOLDEN TO EITHER. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE RENEWED REPORTS IN THE PRESS THAT NIGERIA MAY SOON RESTORE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THAT THE BABANGIDA GOVERNMENT WILL TAKE SUCH A STEP.

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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CONFIDE

SUBJECT: BABANGIDA ANNOUNCES PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO
 - CIVIDIAN RULE

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 04 LAGOS 07557

LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, NI, US

SUBJECT: BABANGIDA ANNOUNCES PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO
 - CIVIDIAN RULE

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY: IN NATION-WIDE TELEVISION ADDRESS EVENING JULY 1, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED THAT PRESENT ADMINISTRATION WOULD OVERSEE CAREFULLY MONITORED AND SUPERVISED PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE CULMINATING IN TURN-OVER OF POWER TO ELECTED PRESIDENT IN 1992 RPT 1992. BABANGIDA PUT GREAT WEIGHT ON NEED FOR NEW POLITICAL CULTURE IN NIGERIA WHICH WOULD PERMIT A VIEW OF POLITICS AS A CONTINUOUS GAME NOT A ONCE-AND-FOR-ALL WINNER-TAKE-ALL BATTLE. REFLECTING THIS EMPHASIS, FMG WILL CREATE A DIRECTORATE (LATER COMMISSION) OF SOCIAL MOBILIZATION TO CARRY ON POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION SIMULTANEOUS WITH MULTI-YEAR PROCESS OF DEVELOPING NEW CONSTITUTION, REGISTRATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, AND STEP-BY-STEP ELECTIONS FROM LOCAL TO NATIONAL LEVEL. FMG WILL ALSO ESTABLISH, IN ADVANCE OF TURNOVER OF POWER, BOTH A CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU AND A CODE OF CONDUCT TRIBUNAL, INSTITUTIONS PROMISED IN THE 1979 CONSTITUTION BUT NEVER ESTABLISHED DURING THE SECOND REPUBLIC. WHILE CERTAIN ISSUES WERE LEFT TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL DRAFT (OR AMEND 1979)

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CONSTITUTION, BABANGIDA INDICATED AFRC CONCLUSIONS WHICH ASSEMBLY WILL BE "INSTRUCTED" TO INCORPORATE IN ITS WORK, I.E. REAFFIRMATION OF THREE-TIER FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ESTABLISHMENT OF

TWO-PARTY SYSTEM, A BICAMERAL FEDERAL ASSEMBLY BUT UNICAMERAL STATE ASSEMBLIES, AND THAT BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ARE TO BE PART-TIME AND NONSALARIED. PRIOR TO TURNOVER, THIS ADMINISTRATION WILL CARRY OUT NATIONAL CENSUS, PUT FORTH "COMPREHENSIVE" PROGRAM ON QUESTIONS OF NEW STATES, AND ESTABLISH NEW REVENUE STRUCTURE. BABANGIDA REJECTED ESTABLISHING PARTICULAR IDEOLOGY, AND REAFFIRMED INTENTION TO COMPLETE AND CONSOLIDATE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM (SAP). BABANGIDA EMPHASIZED THAT ENTIRE PROCESS WOULD BE CAREFULLY MONITORED BY PRESENT ADMINISTRATION AND WARNED POLITICIANS THAT BAN ON POLITICS WOULD CONTINUE UNTIL 1989 AND THAT ANY EFFORTS TO DISTRACT OR OBSTRUCT THIS PROCESS IN THE MEANWHILE WOULD BE REVIEWED AS SABOTAGE. OVERALL, MESSAGE EMPHASIZED POLITICAL ENGINEERING, A TOUGH "GO-SLOW" WARNING TO NIGERIA'S EAGER POLITICAL HOPEFULS, AND THAT THE MILITARY WOULD CONTINUE TO BE FIRMLY IN POWER THROUGHOUT THE TRANSITION PERIOD. END SUMMARY.

3. LONG-AWAITED ANNOUNCEMENT CULMINATED LENGTHY PROCESS THAT BEGAN RATHER LETHARGICALLY WITH APPOINTMENT OF AN ACADEMIC POLITICAL BUREAU IN 1986 THAT DID NOT COMPLETE ITS WORK (THE COOKEY REPORT) UNTIL MARCH 1987; AN INTENSIVE REVIEW OF COOKEY REPORT WITHIN FMG BY A COMMITTEE OF AFRC MEMBERS AND EXPERTS WHICH WORKED FROM MARCH UNTIL LATE JUNE THIS YEAR; AND FINALLY SEVERAL INTENSIVE ALL-DAY AFRC MEETINGS, LASTING RIGHT UP UNTIL THE EVENING OF THE SPEECH. (SPEECH WAS ANNOUNCED FOR 9: 00 PM BUT WAS DELAYED UNTIL 10: 30.) IN THE FINAL MONTHS AFRC MOVED TO KEEP CONTROL OF THE PROCESS OF REVIEW AND DEBATE, FIRST BY BANNING A WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE WHICH HAD LEAKED THE COOKEY REPORT'S CONCLUSIONS, AN ACTION WHICH EFFECTIVELY WARNED OFF OTHER SPECULATORS AND SPOILERS, AND WHICH GAVE THE AFRC TIME TO REACH ITS OWN CONCLUSIONS, AND THEN BY CAREFULLY LEAKING ITSELF THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF ITS CONCLUSIONS THIS PAST WEEK. ALONG WITH BABANGIDA'S SPEECH AFRC ALSO RELEASED ON JULY 1, FOR FIRST TIME, COMPLETE POLITICAL BUREAU REPORT WHICH WILL ALLOW PUBLIC TO SEE WHAT WAS ACCEPTED, WHAT WAS REJECTED, AND WHAT WAS LEFT UNDECIDED BY AFRC IN ITS INTERNAL REVIEW AND DECISION PROCESS.

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, NI, US

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SUBJECT: BABANGIDA ANNOUNCES PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO
4. BABANGIDA BEGAN HIS ADDRESS BY CITING THE FAILURES AND SHORTCOMINGS OF NIGERIA'S PREVIOUS EXPERIENCES WITH CIVILIAN RULE. HE CITED FIRST LACK OF POLITICAL CULTURE WHICH IN TURN LED TO INTOLERANCE AND INDISCIPLINE, AN IGNORING OF RULES, AN ALL-OR-NOTHING ATTITUDE TOWARD POLITICS, AN EROSION OF HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, RIGGED ELECTIONS, MISUSED FUNDS, AND LACK OF COMMITMENT

TO ONE NIGERIA. ALL OF THESE TRAITS WERE EVIDENT IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC (1960-66) AND WERE AMPLIFIED IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC (1979-83). BABANGIDA SAID NIGERIA MUST LEARN LESSONS FROM "ABRUPT" TRANSITION IN 1979. THESE LESSONS WERE THAT THERE MUST BE A BROADLY PHASED TRANSITION, ONE ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL EDUCATION, A BEGINNING OF ELECTIONS AND POLITICS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL AND WORKING UP FROM THERE, ALL LEADING TO "A NEW SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORDER" WITH NEW POLITICAL VALUES. WE MUST BE "PATIENT AND METHODOLOGICAL" HE SAID. NIGERIANS MUST RECOGNIZE THAT INSTITUTIONS HOWEVER CONFIGURED OR RECONFIGURED COULD NOT WORK WITHOUT SUPPORTING VALUES, THAT NIGERIANS HAD TO UNDERTAKE LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THEIR PROBLEMS RATHER THAN SEEKING QUICK ANSWERS.

5. BABANGIDA LISTED THREE "KNOTTY PROBLEMS" WHICH HAD TO BE DECIDED BY THE TIME OF THE TURN-OVER. THESE WERE (1) THE QUESTION OF CREATION OF NEW STATES, AN ISSUE HE SAID HAS BEEN EXPLOITED IN THE PAST BY POLITICIANS AND AGAIN MORE RECENTLY WHEN THE COOKEY REPORT WAS LEAKED, (2) THE NEED FOR A CENSUS, AND (3) THE ALLOCATION OF REVENUE (MEANING PRINCIPALLY THE FORMULA FOR REVENUE SHARING). BABANGIDA SIDE-STEPPED THE TRICKY PROBLEM OF STATE CREATION BY SAYING THAT THE FMG WOULD LATER ANNOUNCE A "COMPREHENSIVE" PLAN ON THE QUESTION OF STATES, HINTING ONLY THAT THE ISSUE MIGHT BE DEFUSED BY STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT. SIMILARLY, ON REVENUE, BABANGIDA SAID COMMISSION WOULD BE SET UP AS PART OF THE TRANSITION PROCESS TO MAKE CONCRETE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS BEFORE THE FINAL TURN-OVER OF POWER. ONLY ON THE CENSUS WAS BABANGIDA UNEQUIVOCAL: THE FMG WOULD UNDERTAKE A CENSUS PRIOR TO PARTISAN ELECTIONS. BABANGIDA EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF THE CENSUS AND ITS INTEGRAL PLACE IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS. (ANOTHER "KNOTTY PROBLEM" WHICH BABANGIDA NEITHER MENTIONED NOR EVIDENTLY HAS DECIDED IS HOW MANY AND FOR HOW LONG TO BAN FORMER OFFICE-HOLDERS FROM POLITICS, AN ISSUE ON WHICH THE COOKEY REPORT WAS CLEAR AND SEVERE, E.G., A 10-YEAR BAN ON MOST FORMER OFFICE-HOLDERS.)

6. ON TIMING, BABANGIDA SAID THE AFRC HAD ADOPTED THE "MINORITY POSITION" IN THE COOKEY REPORT THAT THE FINAL DATE FOR TURN-OVER OF POWER SHOULD BE 1992 (VICE 1990 WHICH WAS BABANGIDA'S PROMISE BACK IN 1985). "SELF--SEEKING" POLITICIANS WILL BE DISAPPOINTED HE SAID, BUT HE WARNED THAT THE OLD BRAND OF POLITICS WOULD NOT/NOT BE PERMITTED. HE EMPHASIZED FURTHERMORE THAT THE PHASED

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ELECTIONS AT LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL WOULD BE CLOSELY SUPERVISED TO ASSURE FAIRNESS AND ADHERENCE TO THE RULES (AND PRESUMABLY TO THE NEW POLITICAL CULTURE). AT THE SAME TIME, BABANGIDA SAID THERE WOULD BE A PROGRAM OF POLITICAL EDUCATION OF THE MILITARY, TEACHING THEM TO RESPECT THE CONSTITUTION AND TO CONCENTRATE ON PROFESSIONALISM AND THE DEFENSE OF THE COUNTRY (I.E. NO MORE COUPS.)

7. WHILE PROMISING A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY THAT WOULD EXAMINE THE 1979 CONSTITUTION AND PROPOSE REDRAFTING OR AMENDMENTS, BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED CERTAIN CONCLUSIONS WHICH THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO

INCORPORATE IN ITS WORK. THE THREE-TIER SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, LOCAL/STATE/FEDERAL, WOULD BE AFFIRMED WITH STRENGTHENING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT. THERE WOULD BE A BICAMERAL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AS IN THE 1979 CONSTITUTION

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, NI, US

SUBJECT: BABANGIDA ANNOUNCES PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO BUT UNICAMERAL STATE ASSEMBLIES. BOTH NATIONAL AND STATE ASSEMBLY MEMBERS, UNLIKE IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC, WOULD NEITHER BE PAID NOR GET FREE HOUSING; THEY ALSO WOULD BE ONLY PART-TIME. THERE WOULD BE A TWO-PARTY SYSTEM. HOW THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD BE ELECTED OR SELECTED WAS NOT/NOT MADE CLEAR NOR WAS THERE ANY REFERENCE TO A REFERENDUM OR OTHER RATIFYING PROCESS FOR THE REVISED CONSTITUTION.

8. WHILE EMPHASIZING NEED FOR NEW POLITICAL CULTURE, BABANGIDA SPECIFICALLY REJECTED IMPOSING AN IDEOLOGY ON THE SYSTEM. THIS WAS IN REFERENCE TO AND REJECTION OF THE COOKEY REPORT'S RECOMMENDATION THAT NIGERIA ADOPT A SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM. BABANGIDA MADE CLEAR THAT THE FMG WOULD CARRY OUT ITS STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM (SAP) DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD, SAYING THAT A STRONG ECONOMIC BASE WAS AS IMPORTANT TO THE COUNTRY AS POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. (COMMENT: THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE SAP IS STRONGLY MARKET ORIENTED AND RUNS DIRECTLY CONTRARY TO SOCIALISM. BABANGIDA WANTED TO NIP THIS ISSUE IN THE BUD. FEW PEOPLE HAD TAKEN THE COOKEY REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS ON IDEOLOGY SERIOUSLY ANYWAY. END COMMENT)

9. PUTTING ALL THIS TOGETHER, BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING TIME TABLE:

- A. 1987:

- THIRD QUARTER: ESTABLISHMENT OF DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL MOBILIZATION, NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE.

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- FOURTH QUARTER: NONPARTISAN LOCAL ELECTIONS.
- B. 1988:
 - FIRST QUARTER: ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION (FOR THE CENSUS), CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, A NATIONAL REVENUE MOBILIZATION COMMISSION, CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU, AND CODE OF CONDUCT TRIBUNAL.
 - SECOND QUARTER: TERMINATION OF THE STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM.
 - THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS: CONSOLIDATION OF THE GAINS OF THE SAP.
- C. 1989:
 - FIRST QUARTER. NEW CONSTITUTION COMPLETED, NEW REVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS RECEIVED AND DECIDED UPON.
 - SECOND QUARTER: LIFT OF BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

- THIRD QUARTER: REGISTRATION OF TWO POLITICAL PARTIES.
- FOURTH QUARTER: PARTISAN LOCAL ELECTIONS.
- D. 1990:
 - STATE ELECTIONS AND INSTALLATION OF STATE GOVERNORS AND ASSEMBLIES.
- E. 1991:
 - FIRST THREE QUARTERS: CENSUS UNDERTAKEN
 - FOURTH QUARTER: PARTISAN LOCAL ELECTIONS.

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#7557

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 04 OF 04 LAGOS 07557

LONDON FOR KOLKER

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, NI, US

SUBJECT: BABANGIDA ANNOUNCES PROCESS OF TRANSITION TO

- F. 1992:
 - FIRST HALF: NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS.
 - SECOND HALF: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND HAND-OVER OF POWER.

10. COMMENT: BABANGIDA AND THE AFRC HAVE CHOSEN A PATH OF GUIDED AND CAREFULLY ENGINEERED TRANSITION TO ELECTED, CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, REJECTING EITHER A SIMPLE TURN-OVER TO CIVILIANS OR AN INDEFINITE EXTENSION OF MILITARY RULE. THE PROGRAM REFLECTS BABANGIDA'S CONCERN, OFTEN EXPRESSED TO AMBASSADOR AND HINTED AT IN SEVERAL SPEECHES, THAT NIGERIA NEEDS A NEW VALUE STRUCTURE THAT WOULD SUSTAIN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT; SUCH VALUES WOULD INCLUDE A STRONG SENSE OF NATIONAL PURPOSE THAT WOULD ENABLE THE COUNTRY TO SURVIVE CRISES WITHOUT EACH TIME SCRAPPING ITS POLITICAL SYSTEM. THE PLAN ALSO MAKES CLEAR THAT THE AFRC INTENDS TO CONTROL THE PROCESS JUST AS IT HAS CONTROLLED THE DEBATE AND DECISIONS ON THE POLITBUREAU REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS. THE AFRC HAS NO INTENTION OF CEDING CONTROL OVER THE TRANSITION PROCESS TO THE POLITICIANS, AND INDEED HAS IMPLIED STRONGLY THAT

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FEW OF THE OLDER POLITICAL PARTIES OR POLITICIANS WOULD BE ABLE TO BUILD EASILY ON THEIR FORMER BASE. BY EXTENDING THE BAN ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY TO THE SECOND QUARTER OF 1989 AND ALLOWING ONLY THREE OR FOUR MONTHS THEREAFTER FOR REGISTRATION OF THE NATION'S TWO POLITICAL PARTIES, THE AFRC HAS PUT TREMENDOUS RESTRICTION ON THE POLITICIANS AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN GENERAL. THIS WILL ALMOST SURELY BE A POINT OF CONTENTION AND AT A MINIMUM WILL INSPIRE STEADILY MORE BEHIND-THE-SCENES POLITICAL MANEUVERING AS THE REGISTRATION DATE GETS CLOSER. THE EMPHASIS ON LOCAL ELECTIONS (THREE ELECTIONS BETWEEN NOW AND 1992) REFLECTS THE BELIEF (HOPE) THAT THE STYLE AND POWER OF OLD-LINE POLITICIANS IN NIGERIA CAN BEST BE BROKEN BY FORCING POLITICIANS TO BE RESPONSIBLE TO A LOCAL BASE OF SUPPORT. THE MAKING OF ASSEMBLIES INTO PART-TIME AND UNPAID OPERATIONS FURTHER DEEMPHASIZES STATE AND NATIONAL JOCKEYING FOR POWER. THREE LOCAL ELECTIONS BEFORE TURNING OVER POWER ALSO ALLOWS THE AFRC TO MONITOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS AND THE

EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS POLITICAL EDUCATION ALL ALONG THE WAY, WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO "CORRECT" ANYTHING THAT IS GOING OFF THE RAILS. BABANGIDA TACKLED ONE VERY CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE HEAD-ON, THE CENSUS. BY CONTRAST, SIDE-STEPPING OF THE STATES QUESTION MAY REFLECT DIVISION WITHIN THE AFRC AND/OR AN UNWILLINGNESS TO GET SIDE-TRACKED IN THE QUAGMIRE OF THIS ISSUE. ESTABLISHMENT OF CODE OF CONDUCT BODIES IS A STRONG STEP TO TRYING TO CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE NIGERIAN SYSTEM, SOMETHING SORELY LACKING IN THE SECOND REPUBLIC. GIVING THESE BODIES THE AUTHORITY, INDEPENDENCE, AND INTEGRITY NEEDED WILL TEST THE AFRC'S ENGINEERING ABILITY, BUT THE RELATIVE INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY IN NIGERIA HOLDS OUT HOPE. IN SUMMARY, IT IS, AS BABANGIDA SAID IN HIS SPEECH, A PROCESS OF POLITICAL ENGINEERING. IN THE MOST FAVORABLE LIGHT, IT IS A CAREFULLY STRUCTURED EFFORT TO CREATE A MORE RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM FOR NIGERIA, AS WELL AS TO LAY A STRONG FOUNDATION OF A FREE AND MARKET-ORIENTED ECONOMY TO HELP SUSTAIN THAT SYSTEM. IN A MORE CRITICAL LIGHT, AND ONE SURELY TO BE EMPHASIZED BY OPPONENTS HERE, IT IS POTENTIALLY A RECIPE FOR SO TIGHTLY CONTROLLED A PROCESS AS TO LEND ITSELF TO HAND-PICKED SUCCESSORS AND INADEQUATE POLITICAL FREEDOM FOR A VIABLE AND TRULY DEMOCRATIC TWO-PARTY SYSTEM TO EMERGE. END COMMENT.

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#7557

SECTION: 01 OF 04

SECTION: 02 OF 04

SECTION: 03 OF 04

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SECTION: 04 OF 04

** END OF TEXT **

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<DIST>SIT: EOB VAX

<PRC> PRIORITY<CLAS> UNCLASSIFIED<OSRI> RUEHOS<DTG> 061452Z JUL 87
<ORIG>FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
<TO>TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6920
INFO RUTAGN/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 1146
RUEHCO/AMEMBASSY COTONOU 1998
RUEHNM/AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 1236
RUTAND/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0964
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 2102
RUTAKA/AMCONSUL KADUNA 0315

file
Nigeria

<SUBJ>SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND
- TRANSITION PROCESS

<TEXT>
UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 06 LAGOS 07659
E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PGOV NI
SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND
- TRANSITION PROCESS

REF: LAGOS 7557
1. THIS UNCLASSIFIED MESSAGE PROVIDES A SUMMARY
DESCRIPTION OF NIGERIA'S PROPOSED NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM,
HIGHLIGHTS OF WHICH ARE ANALYZED IN REFTEL.
~BEGIN SUMMARY~
2. SUMMARY. IN A 30-MINUTE NATIONAL ADDRESS THE
EVENING OF JULY 1, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED THAT
THE TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE WILL BEGIN LATER THIS
YEAR AND BE COMPLETED IN LATE 1992. THE PRESIDENT'S
SPEECH, AND THE 169-PAGE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER RELEASED
ALONG WITH IT, OUTLINED THE STRUCTURE OF NIGERIA'S
FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM, AND THE STEP-BY-STEP TRANSITION
PROCESS PRECEDING THE TURNOVER.
-
3. THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT (FMG) HAS CALLED FOR
THE RETURN TO A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT WITH A
BICAMERAL FEDERAL LEGISLATURE. ONLY TWO POLITICAL
PARTIES WILL BE SANCTIONED. NIGERIA'S THREE-TIER
FEDERAL SYSTEM--LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL
GOVERNMENTS--WILL BE RETAINED. LOCAL GOVERNMENT WILL
SEE ITS SHARE OF FEDERAL REVENUE DOUBLED. THE
TRANSITION WILL BEGIN WITH NON-PARTISAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ELECTIONS IN LATE 1987. AFTER THE BAN ON PARTISAN
POLITICS IS LIFTED AND TWO POLITICAL PARTIES ARE
REGISTERED, ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD IN SEQUENCE AT THE
LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LEVEL. A REVISED VERSION OF
THE 1979 CONSTITUTION WILL BE COMPLETED IN 1989, AND A
NATIONAL CENSUS WILL BE CONDUCTED IN 1991. A CODE OF
CONDUCT BUREAU AND CODE OF CONDUCT TRIBUNAL WILL BE
ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY OF PUBLIC
OFFICIALS. A SPECIAL DIRECTORATE WILL BE TASKED WITH
DEVELOPING A NEW NATIONAL POLITICAL CULTURE. DECISIONS
ON THE CREATION OF NEW STATES AND THE BANNING OF FORMER
POLITICIANS WILL BE REACHED LATER IN THE TRANSITION
PERIOD. DISCIPLINE DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD WILL BE
ENFORCED BY A STANDING SPECIAL TRIBUNAL. END SUMMARY.
~END SUMMARY~
-

PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM, BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE

4. AS IN THE SECOND CIVILIAN REPUBLIC OF 1979-83, THE NEW CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT SYSTEM ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT BABANGIDA ON JULY 1, 1987 WILL HAVE A PRESIDENT AND BICAMERAL NATIONAL LEGISLATURE. TO BE ELECTED, THE PRESIDENT MUST NOT ONLY OBTAIN A SIMPLE MAJORITY OF ALL VOTES CAST NATIONWIDE, BUT MUST ALSO RECEIVE AT LEAST 25 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN EACH OF AT LEAST 230 OF THE COUNTRY'S 301 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS (LGA'S). IF NEITHER PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE CAN MEET BOTH REQUIREMENTS, AN ELECTORAL COLLEGE CONSISTING OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL AND STATE ASSEMBLIES MUST BE CONVENED WITHIN SEVEN DAYS TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT BY SIMPLE MAJORITY. THE PRESIDENT, WHO MUST BE AT LEAST 40 YEARS OLD, WILL SERVE A 4-YEAR TERM, RENEWABLE ONLY ONCE.

5. A VICE PRESIDENT IS AUTOMATICALLY ELECTED ALONG WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WITH WHOM HE SHARES THE ELECTORAL TICKET. THE VICE PRESIDENT MAY RUN FOR PRESIDENT AT THE END OF HIS TERM.

6. THE SAME ELECTORAL AND TENURE RULES HOLD FOR STATE GOVERNORS AND DEPUTY GOVERNORS, EXCEPT THAT THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE WILL CONSIST OF MEMBERS OF THE STATE ASSEMBLY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS. GOVERNORS AND DEPUTY GOVERNORS MUST BE AT LEAST 35 YEARS OLD, AND WILL SERVE 4-YEAR ONCE-RENEWABLE TERMS. CHAIRMEN OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS WILL SERVE 3-YEAR ONCE-RENEWABLE TERMS. THE CHAIRMAN MUST BE AT LEAST 30 YEARS OLD, AND IS ELECTED BY MAJORITY VOTE WITHIN HIS LGA.

7. THE BICAMERAL NATIONAL LEGISLATURE WILL CONSIST OF A SENATE, WITH EQUAL REPRESENTATION FOR EACH STATE, AND A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WITH REPRESENTATION PROPORTIONATE TO STATE POPULATION. STATE ASSEMBLIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS WILL BE UNICAMERAL. STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATORS WILL OPERATE ON A PART-TIME BASIS,

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 06 LAGOS 07659

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PGOV NI

SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND AND WILL NOT BE ENTITLED TO SALARIES. LEGISLATORS WILL RECEIVE SITTING ALLOWANCES AND ALLOWANCES FOR TRANSPORTATION AND HOTEL ACCOMMODATION.

TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

8. THE NEW POLITICAL SYSTEM ALLOWS FOR ONLY TWO POLITICAL PARTIES. PARTY FUNDING WILL BE REGULATED BY ELECTORAL LAW. EACH PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE ORGAN MUST REFLECT FEDERAL CHARACTER.
9. AN AUTONOMOUS NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION (NEC) WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO ORGANIZE AND CONDUCT ELECTIONS. THE NEC WILL ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR:
- RECOGNIZING AND REGISTERING THE TWO POLITICAL PARTIES;
 - MONITORING THE FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND CAMPAIGNS;
 - DETERMINING THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF PUBLIC FUNDS TO BE MADE AVAILABE TO POLITICAL PARTIES;
 - RECOMMENDING THE APPOINTMENT OF STATE ELECTORAL

COMMISSIONERS.

10. THE NEC MEMBERS WILL BE NOMINATED BY THE PRESIDENT AND APPOINTED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATE (GOVERNORS). THE NEC CHAIRMAN WILL BE THE BODY'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER. HE MUST BE BETWEEN 50 AND 70 YEARS OLD. THE NEC'S EIGHT OTHER MEMBERS MUST BE BETWEEN 40 AND 70 YEARS OLD. NO NEC MEMBER MAY BE A MILITARY OFFICER. NONE MAY HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN PARTISAN POLITICS. EACH WILL BE EXPECTED TO HAVE HELD POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE SECTOR. NEC MEMBERS WILL SERVE 5-YEAR ONCE-RENEWABLE TERMS. THEY MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE BODY ONLY FOR CAUSE. THE NEC WILL APPOINT ITS OWN STAFF, INCLUDING SECRETARY, AUDITOR AND LEGAL ADVISER. MEMBERS OF STATE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONS WILL ALSO SERVE 5-YEAR ONCE-RENEWABLE TERMS, AND MUST HAVE THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS AS NEC MEMBERS.

CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

11. THE FMG WILL ESTABLISH A CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE TO INCORPORATE INTO THE 1979 CONSTITUTION THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER. A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WILL THEN BE INAUGURATED TO DEBATE AND RATIFY THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU AND TRIBUNAL

12. A CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU AND A CODE OF CONDUCT TRIBUNAL WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROBITY OF PUBLIC OFFICE-HOLDERS. THESE BODIES WERE FIRST CONCEIVED OF DURING THE SECOND REPUBLIC, BUT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FAILED TO PASS ENABLING LEGISLATION. THE MEMBERSHIP AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BODIES WILL BE AS STIPULATED IN THE 1979 CONSTITUTION, FIFTH SCHEDULE, PART I.

13. MEMBERS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU WILL BE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT, AND RATIFIED BY THE COUNCIL OF STATES. THE BUREAU WILL CONSIST OF TEN MEMBERS, LED BY A CHAIRMAN WHO WILL ALSO BE THE ACCOUNTING OFFICER. EACH MEMBER MUST BE A LEAST 50 YEARS OLD, AND WILL SERVE A FIVE-YEAR RENEWABLE TERM.

14. PUBLIC OFFICIALS WILL BE SUBJECT TO AN INSTITUTIONALIZED SYSTEM OF RECALL. AN ELECTED OFFICIAL WILL BE REQUIRED TO VACATE HIS SEAT BEFORE HIS TERM IS UP IF A MAJORITY OF VOTERS SO DEMAND. A RECALL IS SET IN MOTION VIA PETITION SIGNED BY ONE-THIRD OF REGISTERED

UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 06 LAGOS 07659
E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PGOV NI

SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND VOTERS WITHIN AN OFFICE-HOLDER'S CONSTITUENCY. THE RECALL IS THEN VALIDATED BY SIMPLE MAJORITY VOTE.

NATIONAL REVENUE MOBILIZATION COMMISSION

15. A NATIONAL REVENUE MOBILIZATION COMMISSION WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO OVERSEE REVENUE-SHARING AMONG THE THREE

TIERS OF GOVERNMENT--LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' SHARE OF FEDERAL REVENUE WILL BE INCREASED TO TWENTY PERCENT FROM THE CURRENT TEN PERCENT. THE FUNDS WILL BE DEPOSITED TO THE LGA'S DIRECTLY, RATHER THAN DISBURSED VIA STATE GOVERNMENTS AS IN PAST PRACTICE. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS WILL BE OPENED IN EACH STATE'S BRANCH OF THE THE CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA, INTO WHICH WILL BE DISBURSED ALL FUNDS MEANT FOR THE LGA'S OF THAT STATE. EACH STATE GOVERNMENT MUST CONTRIBUTE TEN PERCENT OF ITS INTERNALLY GENERATED REVENUE TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNT.

16. THE REVENUE COMMISSION WILL BE A PERMANENT, AUTONOMOUS BODY. ITS PURPOSE IS TO CONTINUALLY STUDY THE ISSUE OF REVENUE-SHARING AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUIT CHANGING NEEDS. ITS FUNCTIONS INCLUDE:

- MONITORING THE GENERATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF REVENUE;
- REVIEWING THE ALLOCATION FORMULA PERIODICALLY;
- DETERMINING THE APPROPRIATE RENUMERATION FOR POLITICAL OFFICE-HOLDERS IN THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT.

THE COMMISSION'S MEMBERSHIP WILL CONSIST OF ECONOMISTS, POLITICAL SCIENTISTS, ACCOUNTANTS, GEOGRAPHERS, MILITARY PERSONNEL, AND LABOR UNIONISTS.

NEW POLITICAL CULTURE

17. WITH THE GOAL OF BUILDING A NEW POLITICAL CULTURE THAT WILL REGULATE NIGERIANS' BEHAVIOR IN POLITICS, THE FMG WILL ESTABLISH A DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL MOBILIZATION. THE DIRECTORATE WILL BE ESTABLISHED IMMEDIATELY AND WILL BE BASED IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT. ITS MANDATE IS TO INCULCATE NEW VALUES, POLITICALLY EDUCATE THE ADULT, SOCIALIZE THE YOUNG, AND MOBILIZE THE MASSES FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW ORDER. IT WILL SEEK TO PROMOTE NIGERIANS' SENSE OF RIGHTS, PATRIOTISM AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION. IT WILL URGE THE COUNTRY TO ESCHEW CORRUPTION, DISHONESTY, ELECTION AND CENSUS MALPRACTICES, ETHNICITY, AND RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY. THE DIRECTORATE WILL WORK PRIMARILY WITH THE FAMILY, EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, FARMERS' COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES, LABOR AND STUDENT UNIONS, PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE ARMED FORCES.

18. A PROGRAM OF POLITICAL EDUCATION OF THE MILITARY WILL ALSO BE CONDUCTED. THE PROGRAM IS AIMED AT ENABLING THE MILITARY TO RESPECT THE NATION'S CONSTITUTION AS SOVEREIGN, AND TO RESTRICT ITSELF TO ITS TRADITIONAL ROLE OF NATIONAL DEFENSE.

CENSUS

19. NIGERIA WILL CONDUCT A NATIONAL POPULATION CENSUS IN 1991. AN AUTONOMOUS NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO:

- CONDUCT THE CENSUS;
- DETERMINE THE ACCEPTABILITY OF CENSUS RESULTS;
- MAINTAIN REGISTERS OF THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION THROUGH THE REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS AND SCHOOL ENROLLMENT.

UNCLAS SECTION 04 OF 06 LAGOS 07659

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PGOV NI
SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND
THE POPULATION COMMISSION WILL APPOINT ITS OWN DIRECTOR
AND STAFF.

NO NATIONAL IDEOLOGY

20. THE FMG REJECTED THE POLITICAL BUREAU'S
RECOMMENDATION FOR A SOCIALIST SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND
NATIONALIZATION OF MAJOR INDUSTRIES. THE PRESIDENT SAID
IN HIS NATIONAL ADDRESS THAT THE GOVERNMENT FINDS IT
UNNECESSARY TO ATTACH ANY IDEOLOGICAL LABEL TO THE
COUNTRY'S NEW SOCIO-POLITICAL ORDER. INSTEAD, THE FMG
HAS REITERATED THE GOALS FIRST SET OUT IN THE SECOND
DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF 1970-74:
- A UNITED, STRONG AND SELF-RELIANT NATION;
- A GREAT AND DYNAMIC ECONOMY;
- A JUST AND EGALITARIAN SOCIETY;
- A LAND OF BRIGHT AND FULL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL
CITIZENS; AND
- A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.

NO FORMAL ROLE FOR TRADITIONAL RULERS

21. NIGERIA'S TRADITIONAL RULERS WILL HAVE NO
LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE OR JUDICIAL FUNCTIONS IN THE
FUTURE CIVILIAN REPUBLIC. TRADITIONAL RULERS'
ACTIVITIES ARE TO BE CONFINED TO THE LGA'S WITHIN THEIR
COMMUNITIES. THE GOVERNMENT WILL KEEP A REGISTER OF ALL
TRADITIONAL RULERS.

NO STATE RELIGION

22. THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ADOPT A STATE RELIGION.
WITHIN 25 YEARS IT WILL CEASE ORGANIZING RELIGIOUS
PILGRIMAGES FOR ITS CITIZENS. THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALSO
NO LONGER MAKE FEDERAL GRANTS TO RELIGIOUS BODIES FOR
SETTING UP PLACES OF WORSHIP. DONATIONS ALREADY
PLEDGED, HOWEVER, WILL BE HONORED. THE GOVERNMENT MADE
NO DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO ESTABLISH SHARIA COURTS
(ISLAMIC LAW) IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

FREE AND COMPULSORY PRIMARY EDUCATION

23. PRIMARY EDUCATION (FIRST SIX YEARS) WILL BE FREE
AND COMPULSORY FOR ALL NIGERIAN CHILDREN. FUNDS FOR
RUNNING PRIMARY SCHOOLS WILL BE BORNE BY THE FEDERAL AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

POLICE REORGANIZATION, PRISONS REVIEW

24. ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER, STEPS ARE
ALREADY BEING TAKEN TO REORGANIZE THE STRUCTURE AND
CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE, AND
TO REORIENT THE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR OF ITS
PERSONNEL. ALSO, A REVIEW OF EXISTING PRISON AND
SENTENCING POLICIES WILL BE CONDUCTED. NEW WAYS WILL BE
EXPLORED FOR CORRECTING RATHER THAN IMPRISONING

CONVICTED OFFENDERS. TRAINING AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF PRISON STAFF WILL BE REEXAMINED FOR IMPROVEMENT.

OTHER--PRESS, CIVIL SERVICE, CENTRAL BANK, WOMEN, LABOR

25. NO NEW CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS WILL BE MADE. ACCORDING TO THE WHITE PAPER, THE UNCLAS SECTION 05 OF 06 LAGOS 07659

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: PGOV NI
SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND PROVISIONS FOR PRESS FREEDOM IN THE 1979 CONSTITUTION ARE ADEQUATE.

26. THE WHITE PAPER NOTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING ACTION ON THE 1985 DOTUN PHILLIPS STUDY TEAM REPORT ON THE STRUCTURE, STAFFING AND OPERATION OF THE FEDERAL CIVIL SERVICE.

27. THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS OF THE CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA WILL BE REVIEWED "TO ELIMINATE INEPTITUDE AND CORRUPT PRACTICES" IN THE BANK.

28. "SPECIAL EFFORTS" WILL BE MADE FOR WOMEN'S WELFARE IN AREAS WHERE WOMEN ARE CONSIDERED TO BE "AT A DISADVANTAGE." THIS INCLUDES THE LAUNCHING OF A BLUEPRINT ON WOMEN'S EDUCATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AS WELL AS OTHER MEASURES ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

29. THE WHITE PAPER CALLED FOR MAINTAINING A SINGLE LABOR ORGANIZATION FOR THE COUNTRY.

NO DECISION--STATES CREATION

30. PRESIDENT BABANGIDA SAID THE GOVERNMENT WILL "AT A LATER STAGE" ANNOUNCE A "COMPREHENSIVE AND FIRM DECISION" ON THE CREATION OF ADDITIONAL STATES WITHIN THE TRANSITION PERIOD. HE NOTED HOW THE STATES CREATION ISSUE HAS BEEN EXPLOITED BY POLITICIANS FOR ELECTORAL PURPOSES, AND HOW "COMMUNITY OR ETHNIC CHAMPIONS" HAD RAISED ETHNIC TENSIONS BY EXPLOITING THE RECURRING PROBLEM OF STATES CREATION TO ENLIST POLITICAL SUPPORT.

NO DECISION--BAN ON FORMER POLITICIANS

31. IN HIS NATIONAL ADDRESS, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA MADE NO COMMENT ON THE FATE OF FORMER POLITICIANS. THE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER SAID ONLY THAT THE FMG "IS TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION" ON THE GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED BY THE POLITICAL BUREAU. THE BUREAU RECOMMENDED A COMPREHENSIVE TEN-YEAR BAN ON ALL PUBLIC OFFICIALS WHO SERVED BETWEEN AUGUST 1975 AND AUGUST 1985, INCLUDING LIFETIME BANS ON THOSE FOUND GUILTY OF CORRUPTION. THE BUREAU ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT ALL MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICE-HOLDERS WHO SERVE OR HAVE SERVED BETWEEN AUGUST 1985 AND THE COMPLETION OF THE TRANSITION PROGRAM (1992) BE PROHIBITED FROM HOLDING ELECTIVE OR APPOINTED OFFICE IN THE NEXT CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION.

TRANSITION TIMETABLE--1987-1992

32. THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED THE FOLLOWING TIMETABLE FOR THE TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT:

1987
THIRD QUARTER - ESTABLISHMENT OF DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL MOBILIZATION, NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, CONSTITUTIONAL DRAFTING COMMITTEE.
FOURTH QUARTER - NON-PARTISAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

1988
FIRST QUARTER - ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL POPULATION COMMISSION, CODE OF CONDUCT BUREAU AND TRIBUNAL, CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, NATIONAL REVENUE MOBILIZATION COMMISSION.
SECOND QUARTER - TERMINATION OF STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT PROGRAM (SAP).
THIRD AND FOURTH QUARTERS - CONSOLIDATION OF GAINS OF SAP.

UNCLAS SECTION 06 OF 06 LAGOS 07659

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PGOV NI

SUBJECT: FMG OUTLINES FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM AND
1989

FIRST QUARTER - COMPLETION OF NEW CONSTITUTION, RELEASE OF NEW FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS.

SECOND QUARTER - LIFTING OF BAN ON PARTY POLITICS.

THIRD QUARTER - REGISTRATION OF TWO POLITICAL PARTIES.

FOURTH QUARTER - PARTISAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

1990
ELECTION AND INSTALLMENT OF STATE LEGISLATURES AND GOVERNORS.

1991
FIRST THREE QUARTERS - NATIONAL POPULATION CENSUS.
FOURTH QUARTER - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

1992
FIRST HALF - ELECTIONS INTO FEDERAL LEGISLATURES.
SECOND HALF - PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS AND FINAL DISENGAGEMENT OF ARMED FORCES FROM GOVERNMENT.

33. THE PRESIDENT NCTED IN HIS SPEECH THAT THE TRANSITION PROGRAM MUST BE GRADUAL, PURPOSEFUL AND EFFECTIVE. EACH STAGE OF THE PROGRAM, INCLUDING EVERY ELECTION, WILL BE "ARRANGED FOR AND SUPERVISED BY" THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT.

SPECIAL TRIBUNAL

34. BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED THE IMMEDIATE ISSUANCE OF A GOVERNMENT DECREE TO "PROVIDE LEGAL BACKING TO THE POLITICAL TRANSITION PERIOD AND THE BEHAVIOR OF CITIZENS WITHIN THAT PERIOD." A SPECIAL STANDING TRIBUNAL IS BEING SET UP TO "DEAL WITH DESPATCH ANY VIOLATION OF THE TRANSITION DECREE." THE PRESIDENT NOTED IN HIS NATIONAL ADDRESS THAT ANY ACTIONS HINDERING THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTION OF THE TRANSITION PROGRAM WILL BE TREATED AS "SABOTAGE."
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<SECT>SECTION: 01 OF 06<SSN> 7659<TOR> 870706115840 MSG000173879920
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NSDCT EXIM EXIM BANK WORLD BANK
NSMKS BABANGIDA PRES@VISIT SUMMIT
NSHGS START SUMMIT
NSPLS EXPORT IMPORT
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7881

CONFIDE

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA
REASSERTS STRONG LEADERSHIP AND NIGERIA GETS MOVING

*** START OF TEXT ***

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

PARIS FOR POPE AND OFCD

YAOUNDE ALSO PASS MALABO

STATE ALSO PASS TREASURY, FRB AND EXIM BANK

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV PINS PREL ECON EFIN NI

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA
REASSERTS STRONG LEADERSHIP AND NIGERIA GETS MOVING

REF: LAGOS 4306

1. (CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: IN A DRAMATIC BURST OF DECISION-MAKING AND
DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY, PRESIDENT BABANGIDA DISPELLED
MOUNTING GLOOM OVER RELIGIOUS, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL
TENSIONS THAT SEEMED TO OVERWHELM THE FMG UNTIL JUNE.
THE CENTERPIECE WAS AN UNEXPECTEDLY BOLD PLAN FOR
NIGERIA'S TRANSITION TO CIVILIAN RULE, WHICH WILL BE
COMPLETED IN 1992 (VICE 1990) AND WILL BEGIN THIS YEAR
WITH NON-PARTISAN ELECTIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT. IT
INCLUDES PROVISION FOR A NATIONAL CENSUS, HERETOFORE A

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POLITICAL IMPOSSIBILITY FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR AND THE DEBACLE OF THE 1973 CENSUS. WHILE IT ESCHEWS A POLITICAL LABEL, IT IS IN FACT THE NATURAL COUNTERPART TO BABANGIDA'S 1986 ECONOMIC STRUCTURAL READJUSTMENT

PROGRAM (SAP) AIMED AT A FREE MARKET ECONOMY. IT WILL BE AS DEBATED AS SAP HAS BEEN, WITH SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE MILITARY'S REAL COMMITMENT TO ABANDON POWER. YET BABANGIDA'S TWIN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING PROGRAMS CONSTITUTE THE ONLY REAL NATIONAL AGENDA FOR GOVERNMENT, WITH NO SERIOUS CONTENDERS IN SIGHT. BABANGIDA, WHO VISITED FOUR WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO DRUM UP HIGH LEVEL ATTENDANCE FOR THE JULY ECOWAS SUMMIT IN ABUJA, IS VISIBLY BACK IN GOOD HEALTH AND IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT; WORRISOME HIGH LEVEL GOVERNMENTAL DRIFT IS SUDDENLY NO LONGER THE PROBLEM. MOREOVER, HE HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT HE STILL CAN CARRY THE AFRC WITH HIM IN MAKING CONTROVERSIAL DECISIONS, AND CONTINUES TO ENJOY THE SUPPORT OF THE ARMY. THIS OFFERS HOPE FOR NIGERIA'S FUTURE PROSPERITY AND STABILITY, AND FOR U.S. INTERESTS BILATERALLY AND IN THE REGION. THE FMG IS ALSO MOVING AHEAD ON PLANS TO STRENGTHEN FMG-USG COOPERATION ON CATCHING AND CONVICTING DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND OTHER CRIMINALS, WHICH HAS BEEN A PROBLEM FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS.

2.B. BABANGIDA'S STRONG LEADERSHIP WILL BE NEEDED FOR NIGERIA TO ADDRESS ITS DAUNTING PROBLEMS, EXAMPLES OF WHICH ABOUNDED DURING THE PAST QUARTER. FEDERAL AND STATE INVESTIGATIONS OF THE MARCH RELIGIOUS RIOTS IN ADUNA STATE APPEARED TO LEAD NOWHERE IN THE WAKE OF BITTER MUSLIM OBJECTIONS AND EVEN ACCUSATIONS BY SOME MILITANTS THAT SECURITY FORCES HAD BEEN TAKEN OVER BY CHRISTIANS. THESE TENSIONS WERE AUGMENTED BY A MEETING OF AN ESSENTIALLY CONSERVATIVE NORTHERN "COUNCIL OF ELDERS" THAT SOUTHERNERS AND NORTHERN RADICALS CALLED A DISGUISED POLITICAL COMMITTEE, ENCOURAGING SOUTHERNERS TO BEHAVE LIKEWISE. THE DEVELOPMENTS FORCED THE FMG TO LAUNCH A NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE FROM POTENTIAL TROUBLEMAKERS, AND TO ADD NEW CONTROLS OVER UNAUTHORIZED POLITICAL ACTIVITY DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. THE DEPTH OF NIGERIA'S POLITICAL DIVISIONS ALONG REGIONAL LINES WAS REVEALED BY THE DEATH OF THE YORUBAS' DOMINANT POLITICAL LEADER, "PAPA AWO"--CHIEF AWOLowo. FOR THE MONTH FROM HIS DEATH TO HIS BURIAL, IT WAS THE ONLY NEWS EVENT THAT SEEMED TO MATTER TO YORUBAS, WHO WORRY FOR THEIR FUTURE UNITY AND STABILITY. NORTHERNERS AND EASTERNERS, HOWEVER, SHED NO TEARS. WHILE NIGERIA'S ECONOMY ARGUABLY IS SHOWING SIGNS OF RECOVERING UNDER SAP, THIS IS NOT THE PERCEPTION OF MOST POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS URBANITES, WHO URGENTLY LOOK FOR AN UPTURN THAT AFFECTS THEIR LIVES. THIS PROBLEM CAUSED THE FMG TO BACK OFF AT THE LAST MINUTE FROM ANNOUNCED ELIMINATION OF GASOLINE SUBSIDIES

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

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STATE ALSO PASS TREASURY, FRB AND EXIM BANK

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV PINS PREL ECON EFIN NI

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA AND INCREASES IN TRANSPORT FARES, EVEN THOUGH THESE MOVES ARE IMPORTANT FOR NIGERIAN CREDIBILITY WITH THE WORLD BANK AND THE IMF. THE FMG REMAINED UNABLE TO CLEAR UP ARREARS ON FOREIGN DEBT, MAKING FOREIGN LENDERS RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE MUCH NEEDED NEW MONEY DESPITE SUCCESSFUL DEBT RESCHEDULING AGREEMENTS. WHILE BABANGIDA PUT THE FMG'S GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY FIRMLY BACK ON COURSE BY EARLY JULY, DURING MAY SUBORDINATE OFFICIALS ALLOWED A TRIVIAL BORDER INCIDENT WITH CAMEROON TO DAMAGE BILATERAL RELATIONS. YET WHILE THESE AND OTHER PROBLEMS ABOUNDED, BABANGIDA AT PRESENT HAS REASSERTED EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP, AND WITH IT HOPE FOR PROGRESS. END SUMMARY.

3. THE QUARTER, WHICH BEGAN WITH THE FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT RESPONDING AWKWARDLY TO ADVERSE DEVELOPMENTS AND GROWING DISAFFECTION BY THE URBAN ELITES TO ECONOMIC STRUCTURAL READJUSTMENT, ENDED IN A DRAMATIC BURST OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP NOT SEEN SINCE PRESIDENT BABANGIDA ANNOUNCED HIS FAR-REACHING ECONOMIC PROGRAM OVER A YEAR AGO. ALTHOUGH PORTENTS OF THIS OUTBURST WERE BEGINNING TO SURFACE IN MAY AND BY MID-JUNE WERE OBVIOUSLY COMING, THE COMPREHENSIVE SWEEP OF THE TRANSITION PROGRAM ANNOUNCED BY PRESIDENT BABANGIDA ON JULY 1 FOR A FULL RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE BY 1992 WAS NEVERTHELESS BREATHTAKING. ALTHOUGH THE PLAN POSTPONED SOME CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES, NOTABLY THE BANNING OF FORMER POLITICIANS FROM FUTURE OFFICE-HOLDING AND THE POSSIBLE CREATION OF NEW STATES, ITS DECISION TO HOLD A NATIONAL CENSUS ALONE IS AN ACT OF POLITICAL COURAGE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE THAT HAS ELUDED NIGERIAN GOVERNMENTS SINCE THE ABORTIVE 1973 CENSUS. IT ALSO DEMONSTRATED, CONTRARY TO MOST EXPECTATIONS, THAT BABANGIDA STILL HAS THE PERSONAL AUTHORITY TO GET THE ARMED FORCES RULING COUNCIL (AFRC) TO ENDORSE SUCH AN AMBITIOUS PROGRAM AFFECTING THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND RELIGIOUS INTERESTS OF EVERY NIGERIAN.

4. THE TRANSITION PROGRAM, WHILE THE MOST SPECTACULAR, WAS HARDLY THE ONLY INDICATOR OF THE NEW SENSE OF DIRECTION AND SHEER ENERGY BEING DEMONSTRATED BY PRESIDENT BABANGIDA. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE THE FMG ANNOUNCED THE UNIFICATION OF THE "OFFICIAL" OR SO-CALLED

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FIRST-TIER FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATE AND THE ESSENTIALLY FREE MARKET DETERMINED SECOND-TIER RATE (SFEM). THE OLD SFEM WILL HENCEFORTH BE THE "FOREIGN EXCHANGE MARKET," NOW CALLED FEM, AND THE UNIFIED EXCHANGE RATE WILL BE DETERMINED BY MARKET FORCES IN BI-WEEKLY AUCTIONS. IN A SPEECH IN ANAMBRA STATE JUST BEFORE ANNOUNCING THE AFRC DECISIONS, BABANGIDA SAID THERE IS NO TURNING BACK FROM A FREE MARKET ECONOMY, WHICH SET THE STAGE FOR THE WHITE PAPER'S FLAT REJECTION OF SOCIALISM. POLITICALLY, THE FMG ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL COMPLETE THE REVIEWS AND PROSECUTIONS OF FORMER POLITICIANS UNDER THE DECREE TRIBUNALS BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. IT ALSO ANNOUNCED

THE CREATION OF THE LONG POSTPONED NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, WHOSE PURPOSE IS TO ADVISE THE FMG ON HANDLING POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE RELIGIOUS ISSUES. THIS TIME, UNLIKE LAST YEAR WHEN THE IDEA WAS FIRST BROACHED, CHRISTIAN LEADERS DECIDED THE STRICTLY AUTONOMOUS COUNCIL MET ITS MINIMAL NEEDS, AND ACCEPTED MEMBERSHIP. FOR THE MOMENT THIS PROVIDED A POTENTIALLY HELPFUL FORUM TO HARMLESSLY DISCUSS--BUT NOT RESOLVE--SERIOUS RELIGIOUS TENSIONS. ITS SUCCESSFUL LAUNCHING CLEARED AWAY AN IMPEDIMENT TO UNVEILING THE POLITICAL TRANSITION PLAN ONLY DAYS LATER.

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV PINS PREL ECON EFIN NI

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA

. THE ENERGETIC DECISION-MAKING ON DOMESTIC ISSUES IN JUNE AND EARLY JULY WAS MATCHED BY A FLURRY OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY BY BABANGIDA. HE PAID A WHIRLWIND TRIP TO TOGO, SENEGAL AND THE COTE D'IVOIRE IN LATE JUNE, AND ANOTHER TO NEIGHBORING BENIN IN EARLY JULY. WHILE THE PRIMARY PURPOSE WAS TO ENCOURAGE HIGH LEVEL ATTENDANCE AT THE JULY 7-8 ECOWAS SUMMIT IN ABUJA, THE VISITS ACCOMPLISHED OTHER IMPORTANT GOALS. BABANGIDA MADE AMENDS TO SENEGALESE PRESIDENT DIOUF OVER NOT BEING PRESENT TO GREET HIM DURING HIS VISIT TO NIGERIA EARLIER THIS YEAR AND TO ESTABLISH A WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH A RESPECTED MODERATE AFRICAN LEADER. BABANGIDA ALSO ESTABLISHED A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DOYEN OF WEST AFRICAN LEADERS, IVORIAN PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, WHOSE COUNTRY IS VITAL TO THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF ECOWAS. IT PAID OFF; HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY ATTENDED THE ECOWAS SUMMIT. BABANGIDA BOLSTERED AN ALREADY GOOD LINK WITH TOGOLESE PRESIDENT EYEDEMA, AND LAID DOWN A MARKER REGARDING A POSSIBLE NIGERIAN MILITARY RESPONSE IF TOGO

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AGAIN FACES AN ATTACK FROM FORCES BASED IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES (READ GHANA). IN BENIN HE MADE GOOD ON HIS POSTPONED VISIT AND ADDED LUSTER TO HIS GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY.

7. BABANGIDA'S TOUR DE FORCE OF JUNE AND EARLY JULY IS ALL THE MORE REMARKABLE FOR ITS CONTRAST WITH THE GLOOMY TREND OF EVENTS IN EARLY 1987 (REFTEL), WHICH CONTINUED THROUGH APRIL AND MAY. WHEN IN APRIL THE FMG INDICATED THAT NIGERIA WAS OFFERING TO HOST THE 1988 OAU SUMMIT, WHICH WOULD MAKE BABANGIDA OAU CHAIRMAN AT THE OAU'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY SUMMIT, THE IDEA DID NOT SEEM ENTIRELY CREDIBLE. NOW IN JULY, IT DOES. BABANGIDA'S CREATIVE LEADERSHIP OF AFRICA'S TROUBLED GIANT DID NOT END WITH THE COURAGEOUS 1986 ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING PROGRAM. THE DOMESTIC REACTIONS TO THE BOLD POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING

PROGRAM ARE JUST BEGINNING--SO FAR MORE RESTRAINED BOTH PRO AND CON THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED--BUT ONE LEITMOTIV IS CLEAR. FOR BETTER OR WORSE BABANGIDA'S AFRC-ENDORSED AGENDA IS THE ONLY NATIONAL AGENDA. BABANGIDA'S FOREIGN TRAVELS VIVIDLY SHOWED THAT HE HAD RECOVERED FROM HIS MEDICAL PROBLEMS, AND PHYSICALLY WAS BACK IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT. THIS FACT WAS A SIGNIFICANT COUNTERPOINT TO THE IMPRESSIVE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND POLICY AGENDA HE WAS PRESENTING TO HIS FELLOW CITIZENS. NIGERIA UNDER BABANGIDA HAS CHARTERED A NEW PATH AND AGAIN IS ON THE MOVE.

8. FOR ALL THE DAZZLE OF BABANGIDA'S RECENT DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MOVES, THE GLOOMY EVENTS THAT PRECEDED THEM POINT TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS THAT LIE AHEAD. THE DAUNTING LITANY INCLUDES:

8.A. RIOTS' AFTERMATH. FOLLOWING THE MID-MARCH RELIGIOUS RIOTS IN KADUNA, IN APRIL THE FMG IMPLEMENTED DECREES BANNING RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS FROM CAMPUSES FOR 12 MONTHS AND AUTHORIZING JUSTICE KARIBI-WHYTE'S TRIBUNAL TO INVESTIGATE THE RIOTS' CAUSES. BY MAY, KADUNA STATE'S OWN DONLI INVESTIGATION PANEL, WHICH CAME UNDER SERIOUS POLITICAL FIRE FROM MUSLIM LEADERS, SUBMITTED ITS REPORT, AND GOVERNOR UMARU LATER TOLD NEWSMEN--AS CHRISTIANS FEARED--THAT NO IMPORTANT PERSONS WERE INVOLVED. SHEIKH GUMI'S CRITICISM OF ARMY AND POLICE CONDUCT TOWARD ARRESTED RIOTERS HELPED FOSTER A MUSLIM ARGUMENT THAT THEY MORE THAN THE CHRISTIANS WERE THE RIOTS' VICTIMS. IN JUNE THE YOUNG MILITANT HEAD OF THE RESPECTED NORTHERN MUSLIM COUNCIL OF ULAMA PUBLISHED A BLISTERING ATTACK ON THE ARMY AND POLICE FOR SELLING

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LONDON FOR KOLKER

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV PINS PREL ECON EFIN NI

SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA
OUT TO THE CHRISTIANC, WHICH LED TO HIS ARREST ALONG
WITH SEVERAL "NEW NIGERIAN" EDITORS WHO ALLOWED THE
INFLAMMATORY ADVERTISEMENT TO BE PRINTED. THE SEEDS OF
MILITANT NORTHERN MUSLIM DISAFFECTION FROM THE FMG,
PREVIOUSLY SOWN, APPEAR TO BE GERMINATING. WE BELIEVE
THESE EVENTS CAUSED THE FMG TO REVIVE AND IMPLEMENT ITS
DORMANT RELIGIOUS ADVISORY COUNCIL PROPOSAL--THIS TIME
IN A PALATABLE FORM FOR CHRISTIANS--IN AN EFFORT TO
DEFUSE A THREATENING SITUATION. THE FMG IS ON TOP OF
THE SITUATION FOR NOW, BUT IT REMAINS A SERIOUS
PROBLEM. WE SUSPECT THE KARIBI-WHYTE TRIBUNAL WILL NOT
HAVE MUCH MORE IMPACT THAN THE DONLI PANEL.

8.B. PAPA AWO'S DEATH. THE DEATH ON MAY 9 OF CHIEF
OBAFEMI AWOLowo, CONTROVERSIAL LEADER OF THE FORMER UNP
AND THE OVERWHELMINGLY DOMINANT POLITICAL LEADER OF THE
YORUBAS, PUSHED ALL OTHER NEWS IN NIGERIA SIDE UNTIL HIS

BURIAL ON JUNE 6. IT SERVED AS AN IMPRESSIVE REMINDER
OF HOW DIVIDED NIGERIANS ARE ALONG ETHNO-LINGUISTIC AND
REGIONAL LINES. THE FIVE YORUBA STATES MOURNED, AND THE
NORTH AND EAST WERE UNMOVED. SOME YORUBAS FEAR FOR
THEIR FUTURE WITHOUT SUCH A DOMINANT LEADER; OTHERS SEE
THE OPPORTUNITY TO STRIKE FUTURE NATIONAL ALLIANCES
IMPOSSIBLE UNDER "PAPA AWO." IT RAISED REAL UNCERTAINTY
ABOUT THE FUTURE POLITICS AND STABILITY OF TUMULTUOUS
YORUBALAND WHEN CIVILIAN POLITICS RESUMES. THE FIRST
TEST FOR YORUBAS--AS FOR ALL OTHER NIGERIANS--WILL BE
THE NON-PARTISAN LCCNL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS SLATED FOR
THIS YEAR.

8.C. COUNCIL OF ELDERS. A MEETING IN EARLY JUNE OF A
SELF-NAMED COUNCIL OF ELDERS OF NORTHERN MUSLIM
CONSERVATIVE LEADERS WITH A FEW CHRISTIANS FOR THE
PUTATIVE PURPOSE OF TRYING TO DECIDE HOW TO HELP EASE
RELIGIOUS TENSIONS SET OFF A BITTER REACTION FROM
SOUTHERNERS, SOME MIDDLE BELTERS, AND NORTHERN
RADICALS. THE CRITICS SAID THE GROUP WAS LITTLE MORE
THAN A COVER FOR PRELIMINARY PARTY ORGANIZATION BY
FORMER NNP LEADERS. THIS ADDED TO NORTH-SOUTH AS WELL
AS RELIGIOUS TENSIONS, AND ENCOURAGED SOUTHERNERS TO
PURSUE THEIR OWN DISGUISED PRELIMINARY POLITICKING. THE
FIRESTORM PROMPTED FMG REMINDERS ABOUT THE POLITICAL
BAN, AND COULD ONLY HAVE ENCOURAGED THE AFRC TO INCLUDE
THE TOUGH CONTROLS ON UNAUTHORIZED POLITICAL ACTIVITY
PRESENTED IN THE POLITICAL TRANSITION PLAN. THE EPISODE
SHOWED HOW EASILY QUASI-OPEN POLITICS IS TRIGGERED AS
NIGERIA MOVES INTO ITS TRANSITION PLAN, AND HOW HARD IT
WILL BE FOR THE FMG TO CONTAIN THESE PRESSURES.

8.D. LABOR AND STUDENTS. TROUBLES CONTINUE AT VARYING
DEGREES OF INTENSITY WITH STUDENTS AND ORGANIZED LABOR.

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ON MAY DAY THE FMG BACKED OFF FROM A HOTLY PROTESTED ORDER DIMINISHING MINIMUM WAGE COVERAGE, AGREED TO RECONSIDER AN EQUALLY CONTESTED DECREE AUTHORIZING STATE GOVERNMENTS TO FORCE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM WAGE EARNERS, AND LIFTED THE BAN ON FORMER LABOR LEADERS. THIS BROUGHT BACK A WORKING DIALOGUE WITH THE NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS, WHICH NEVERTHELESS STILL FLATLY OPPOSES SAP AND ARGUES SAP HAS FAILED. IN LATE APRIL, STUDENTS RIOTED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, FORCING A BRIEF CLOSURE. ON MAY 23, THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE STUDENT DEATHS LAST YEAR AT AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, AUTHORITIES SHUT DOWN SIX CAMPUSES TO PRECLUDE EXPECTED DISORDERS. NONE OF THIS SPELLS REAL TROUBLE FOR THE FMG AT PRESENT, BUT IT IS A REMINDER THAT ORGANIZED LABOR AND STUDENTS REMAIN PROBLEMS.

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LONDON FOR KOLKER
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA
8.E. SFEM TO FEM BUT HARD TIMES PERSIST. DISTRESS WITH THE LACK OF VISIBLE SUCCESS WITH REVIVING EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT, AND CURBING FEM-INDUCED PRICE INFLATION OF IMPORTED GOODS, CONTINUED INTO THE SECOND QUARTER. WHILE ARGUABLY PARTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF RECOVERY, AGRICULTURE IS BEGINNING TO PROSPER, AND NON-OIL EXPORTS ARE RISING, THE PERCEPTION OF THE POLITICALLY SENSITIVE URBAN ELITE REMAINS NEGATIVE. STATE GOVERNMENTS AGAIN ARE HAVING MONTHLY FINANCIAL CRISES. A NEW FACTOR IS RISING FOOD PRICES, ATTRIBUTABLE IN LARGE PART TO A DELAY IN THE ONSET OF THE CURRENT RAINY SEASON, THE ABSENCE OF WHICH HAD HELD INFLATION IN CHECK LAST YEAR DESPITE THE CURRENCY DEVALUATION. AFTER MORE THAN FIVE YEARS OF AUSTERITY AND WORSENING CONDITIONS, MIDDLE CLASS NIGERIANS ARE GROWING IMPATIENT FOR RELIEF THAT TOUCHES THEM. FOR THIS REASON THE FMG AT THE LAST MINUTE BACKED AWAY FROM IMPLEMENTING THE PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED ELIMINATION OF SUBSIDIES ON REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, AND ATTENDANT INCREASES IN BUS AND TAXI FARES. FMG LEADERS KNOW HOW IMPORANT THESE MOVES ARE TO THE WORLD BANK AND THE IMF, BUT REASONED THE RISKS ARE TOO GREAT AT PRESENT. THE COMMITMENT TO FREE PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE TRANSITION PROGRAM, WHILE ITSELF A REDUCTION FROM THE POLITICAL BUREAU'S RECOMMENDATION, SHOWED THE FMG'S SENSITIVITY TO THE BASIC ITEMS THAT

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NIGERIANS FEEL STRONGLY ABOUT. ON A SOMEWHAT BRIGHTER NOTE, THE FMG BELATEDLY IS BEGINNING TO MAKE A BETTER PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF ITS SUCCESSES AND IS TRYING TO RALLY WORRIED FORMER SUPPORTERS OF SAP. THE PROBLEM ILLUSTRATES THAT FMG LEADERS SEE PROVIDING VISIBLE ECONOMIC SUCCESS AS THE BOTTOM LINE TO THE TOTALITY OF THEIR COMBINED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMS, AND THEY HAVE NOT YET TURNED THE CORNER.

8.F. FOREIGN DEBTS. THE FMG REMAINED UNABLE TO PRODUCE ENOUGH FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO PAY ALL ARREARS ON FOREIGN DEBTS, MAKING FOREIGN GOVERNMENT EXPORT CREDIT AGENCIES, SUCH AS EXIM, AND COMMERCIAL BANKS RELUCTANT TO PROVIDE NEW MONEY IN SPITE OF OTHERWISE SUCCESSFUL DEBT RESCHEDULING AGREEMENTS. THE FUTURE MAY BE BRIGHTER WITH BETTER OIL REVENUES, LESS DIVERSION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO DEDICATED ACCOUNTS, AND GRADUALLY INCREASING NON-OIL EXPORTS AND CAPITAL REPATRIATION. NONETHELESS, IT REMAINS A SERIOUS PROBLEM THAT FRUSTRATES THE FMG AND HER FOREIGN ECONOMIC PARTNERS, AND DELAYS MUCH NEEDED INFUSIONS OF FOREIGN CAPITAL AND CREDITS.

9. THE OUTLOOK. NIGERIANS DON'T HAVE TO BE TOLD THAT THE PATH AHEAD IS TREACHEROUS; THE FMG FACES RISKS AT EVERY TURN. YET, ASIDE FROM CONSTANT UNHAPPINESS OVER THE EFFECTS OF AUSTERITY, BABANGIDA HAS DISPELLED THE GLOOM THAT INCREASINGLY AFFLICTED POLITICALLY CONSCIOUS NIGERIANS UNTIL RECENTLY. HE IS VISIBLY BACK IN CHARGE, IN APPARENT GOOD HEALTH, CHARTING ANOTHER BOLD COURSE TO

ENABLE NIGERIANS TO HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE. THE POLITICAL TRANSITION PLAN WILL BE DEBATED, TO A DEGREE PUBLICLY AND, FOR WOULD-BE POLITICIANS--PRIVATELY, AND CRITICIZED, JUST AS SFEM (NOW FEM) AND SAP HAVE BEEN. THERE IS, FOR STARTERS, REAL SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE BONA FIDES OF THE MILITARY'S COMMITMENT TO ABANDON POWER, EXCEPT TO CHANGE INTO CIVILIAN GARB. YET BABANGIDA ENJOYS THE CONTINUING SUPPORT OF THE AFRC AND ARMY, NOT JUST TO CLING TO POWER BUT TRULY TO GOVERN. THIS IS AN ACHIEVEMENT THAT EVEN CRITICS APPRECIATE. THERE SIMPLY IS NO COMPETING POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC GAME PLAN. AT BOTTOM, NIGERIANS WANT THEIR GOVERNMENT TO SUCCEED, AND

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

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SUBJECT: QUARTERLY POLITICAL ASSESSMENT: BABANGIDA
KNOW THAT IT WILL TAKE BOLD AND STRONG LEADERSHIP TO DO
THIS. FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, BABANGIDA HAS THE

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SUPPORT HE NEEDS TO PURSUE HIS TRANSITION PLAN AND HIS ECONOMIC PROGRAM.

10. U.S. INTERESTS. BABANGIDA'S POLITICAL PLAN, THE NATURAL COUNTERPART TO HIS FREE MARKET ECONOMIC POLICIES, IS CONSISTENT WITH U.S. INTERESTS. HIS DRAMATIC REASSERTION OF HIS GOVERNING ABILITY IN TURN SUPPORTS THESE INTERESTS. THE FMG IS ALSO MOVING QUICKLY AND PUBLICLY TO EASE A MAJOR BILATERAL CONCERN: THE "NIGERIAN CONNECTION" IN DRUG TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES. A NIGERIAN DELEGATION OF JUSTICE, CUSTOMS AND POLICE EXPERTS MET WITH THEIR USG COUNTERPARTS IN WASHINGTON IN LATE JUNE AND EARLY JULY. THIS FOLLOWS UP COMMITMENTS MADE DURING SECRETARY SHULTZ'S VISIT TO LAGOS LAST JANUARY. THE OUTLOOK IS FOR NIGERIAN ATTORNEY GENERAL AJIBOLA TO SIGN AN INTERIM AGREEMENT ON FORMS OF BILATERAL LEGAL COOPERATION LATER THIS YEAR, LEADING EVENTUALLY TO A TREATY. MEANWHILE, THE FMG HOPES TO CREATE ITS OWN ANTI-NARCOTICS ABUSE AGENCY, AND INCREASE COOPERATION WITH OUR RESIDENT DEA AGENTS. WHILE BILATERAL PROBLEMS CONTINUE, SUCH AS THE FMG BAN ON KEY GRAIN IMPORTS, THE OVERALL OUTLOOK FOR BILATERAL RELATIONS REMAINS EXCELLENT, WITH HOPES FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENTS.

LYMAN

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