

Mr. PALMER. I did not mean to say that, Mr. Congressman. I have no doubt that these fears are very real in Biafra, and I think Biafra has been isolated for some time. There have been events in the past which quite naturally would cause them to be fearful with respect to their future.

What I would say, and say with some conviction, is that I do not believe myself that there is any basis for a fear that the Federal Government would pursue a policy of genocide. That is not to say that the fears are not real in Biafra. I just do not believe myself that the fears have a basis in fact in this sense. This is why I think that it is so terribly important that other countries, other African countries, interest themselves in these problems and try to work out terms for a settlement that will provide the maximum reassurance to the Ibo population of Nigeria so that when peace is restored there will be no excesses.

I think what the Federal Government has said with respect to its willingness to bring in foreign observers as part of any peacekeeping machinery, and so forth, is an earnest of the Federal Government intentions to do everything it can to assure there is a peaceful and honorable integration of the Ibo population into Nigeria.

Mr. DIGGS. Do you see any evidence of any other secessionist movements in Africa? There are people who are saying that this is merely the vanguard of a further balkanization which will take place on that continent.

Mr. PALMER. The only serious one that I can cite would be the situation in the Sudan which has been going on for some time. The southern Sudanese, and there are certain secessionist tendencies, desire to obtain greater autonomy.

However, I do not think that one can say that just because there are no other active secessionist movements of this kind, that others could not arise.

Even within Nigeria itself I think progress is being made in knitting the nation together.

I think the effect of the civil war has had the effect within that area which is controlled by the Federal Government of hastening that process.

If it went the other way, if Biafra were successful in seceding, I think it would have implications with respect to the future unity of the remainder of Nigeria.

There are other areas in Africa as well, and there are local differences.

A great deal of constructive work is being done in the other direction. I think one of the most impressive situations is the Cameroons, where you have a growingly successful federation between a former French-speaking area and a former English-speaking area. I was encouraged to see on the French side that they are all learning English and on the English side they are all learning French, so that is going in the right direction.

Mr. DIGGS. I do not sense the same kind of excitement in our policy toward Africa as I sensed 10 years ago in our involvement with the continent, which was launched with a great deal of fanfare and a great deal of implied promises, at least, that we would be very heavily committed in the development of that country.

Does this reflect a change in our policy toward the continent or has it been complicated by our priorities in Southeast Asia and in other areas?