

AFRICA BRIEFING—1968

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AFRICA BRIEFING—1968

TUESDAY, JULY 23, 1968

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 10 a.m., in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Barratt O'Hara (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. O'HARA. We are happy to have with us this morning Assistant Secretary of State Palmer, who has just returned from an extensive trip to many countries in Africa.

Before you proceed with your remarks, Mr. Secretary, will you be kind enough to inform the subcommittee as to your itinerary?

STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH PALMER, 2d, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Mr. PALMER. Yes; I would be very happy to.

I started out, Mr. Chairman, in Gambia.

Mr. O'HARA. Might I remark, Mr. Secretary, that we have a large attendance of the subcommittee here, and Mr. Frelinghuysen, a member of the full committee and a former delegate to the United Nations, a very distinguished gathering of spectators, all a compliment to you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I started in Gambia on May 31. I was to have started in Senegal; but, because of troubles there, I had to go on to my next stop.

From Gambia I went on to Guinea and spent 4 days there, and to Sierra Leone, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Gabon, the Congo—Kinshasa—Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda; and then I came back across to Nigeria and to Senegal, then went to Paris, Geneva, and London.

Mrs. BOLTON. Can you fly across now?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, you can. There are several services, including a Pan American service.

I will, Mr. Chairman, with your permission, cover each one of the stops because I did visit a number of interior places in each one of the several countries.

(The prepared statement of Mr. Palmer follows:)

STATEMENT OF HON. JOSEPH PALMER 2d, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman, I am both pleased and honored that you have invited me to discuss with the members of this Committee my recent trip to Africa.

Before doing this, however, I would like, for my part, to add to the many tributes which were paid to you on the floor of the House last Tuesday, July 16,

when you spoke so eloquently in behalf of the Foreign Assistance legislation. I noted among the statements made by your colleagues the true and well-earned words of the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs when he expressed his appreciation and admiration for your great work as Chairman of this Subcommittee on Africa. In addition, Dr. Morgan expressed two thoughts which I would like to reiterate. He noted the affection and esteem in which you are held by the leaders of every country in Africa, and he expressed the admiration of the Bureau of African Affairs in the Department of State for your service in behalf of African-American relations.

I would like to affirm in the strongest possible terms my own support for this tribute. You have, indeed, Mr. Chairman, been a source of strength and inspiration to us all.

I recall that it was about ten years ago when you, Mr. Chairman, made a significant trip through Africa. I need hardly emphasize the transformation that has taken place during this past decade. My own trip of the past six weeks—when I visited some sixteen African countries—gave me new insights into this rapidly changing continent.

In almost all of these countries I found many developments of an encouraging nature. There was a sense of dedication, of determination and purpose among African leaders as they tackle their awe-inspiring problems of national development. There was a similar sense of dedication and service among the American officials working in Africa. I spoke with African heads of regional organizations, such as President Diouri of Niger, presently the Chairman of both the Common Organization of African and Malagasy States and the Entente, and with President Beheiry of the African Development Bank—thereby gaining further understanding of African cooperative efforts.

I visited over a hundred developmental projects which illustrated the value of effectively continuing our economic assistance programs. I saw a number of Peace Corps activities which demonstrated the vigor and effectiveness of these volunteers. I saw the benefits of American private enterprise and had a glimpse of the opportunities which can be developed for such activity. And everywhere I encountered the well-known hospitality of the African leaders and their people which made the entire trip a real pleasure. May I highlight for you a few of my principal impressions and then make myself available to the Subcommittee for questions and discussion if it so desires:

Africa, during the past decade, has been going through a process of problem identification. While this process is by no means completed—and may never be—it has resulted in delimiting the major tasks and priorities which lie ahead. The experience is resulting in far more pragmatism and a greater emphasis on internal problems rather than on ideological adventures.

The emphasis almost everywhere is increasingly on agricultural production as the realistic basis for development, with secondary emphasis on transportation, communications and the exploitation of mineral resources.

Along with this pragmatic approach to developmental problems, the advantages of regional cooperation are receiving increased attention and acceptance. In this regard, the urge to break down the barriers between English-speaking and French-speaking Africa is gaining force.

Nations of Africa are quietly, but firmly, determined to assert positions of true independence, to build national identities reflecting African values and based on African aspirations. Similarly, efforts are beginning to be made to involve people of all levels of life in the entire developmental process. Ministers and high officials are spending more time outside their capitals, thus bringing the government to the people and informing themselves of the desires and needs of the country as a whole. The increasing attempts to impart a sense of national identity by emphasizing African cultural heritage is also worthy of note.

Virtually everywhere I went I found great friendship for the U.S.

—There is deep gratitude for our programs of economic assistance in all of its forms—A.I.D., Peace Corps, PL 480, Eximbank, etc.

—We benefit greatly from our own revolutionary past and the fact that the principles for which we stand as a nation are principles that are acceptable to Africans.

—There is widespread understanding of what our Government is doing to advance the cause of civil rights and equal opportunity here in the U.S.

—There has been a substantial improvement and understanding of the American position on Viet-Nam since the talks in Paris began.

At the same time Africans still have concerns with respect to their relationships with us:

—They are deeply concerned at the prospect of considerable diminution in aid available to them in the period immediately ahead. While they accepted my frank explanations as to the reasons for this diminution, there is a danger if we are not able within a reasonable period to at least restore past levels of aid and to introduce more flexibility with respect to our programs.

—Similarly, any reversal of direction or loss of momentum by a future Administration with respect to civil rights and equal opportunity could deal a heavy blow to our relationships in Africa.

May I give substance to these general impressions by recounting very briefly my visit to the sixteen African countries during the period between the beginning of June and the middle of July.

The Gambia (May 31-June 3).—Bathurst, the capital of The Gambia, was the first stop on my African tour. Here, I met with the Prime Minister, Sir Dawda Jawara, and members of his cabinet for a frank exchange of views on matters of mutual interest. As always, I found the Gambians most friendly in their attitude toward the U.S., pragmatic in their approach to the difficult problems of development, and sharing with us a similar world view. The Gambians were particularly appreciative of our modest aid effort in which they place great hope.

Guinea (June 3-7).—Though faced with many difficulties, President Toure has succeeded in solving a number of the problems of nation-building. My visit to Guinea was the occasion for the President and people of Guinea to demonstrate that despite past difficulties they have warm feelings for the U.S., sincerely wish sound relations and are proudly independent. President Toure himself took me out in the provinces, introduced me to his people, and encouraged me to meet with and talk to Guineans of all walks of life. He showed me the imaginative way Guineans are uniting their art and tradition with the task of building a modern society. The President and his people are most anxious for the success of planned American private investment to develop Guinea's bauxite and other resources. My visit to Guinea was one of the most useful of my entire trip.

Sierra Leone (June 7-8).—My brief visit to Freetown came during a period when Prime Minister Siaka Stevens was in the process of dealing with a number of internal domestic problems. I nevertheless was able to have a wide-ranging discussion with him, which among other things contributed to a better understanding of the role of the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone. It is to be hoped that with the return to civilian rule in Freetown the country will be able to work out its political problems and reengage its efforts in solving its economic problems.

Upper Volta (June 8-11).—In Upper Volta I had most cordial meetings with President Lamizana and his ministers dealing with both foreign and domestic affairs. This gave me the opportunity of discussing both African matters and developments within the country itself. Among my interesting visits on this trip was one to the Markoy cattle ranch, a project financed by A.I.D. I was much impressed by this pilot animal husbandry project, as well as the country's determination to tighten its belt and work for its economic development. I also took this occasion to fly over the rich nearby manganese ore deposits in the Tambao area of the country.

Niger (June 11-13).—In Niger, I had long and helpful talks with President Diori, who recalled with great pleasure his visit last year to the United States, as well as with other principal officials. President Diori—like other African leaders—was most generous in his hospitality to me personally. His role in OCAM and the Entente and his deep concern with the Nigerian problem gives him a special position in African affairs. I also was able to visit the A.I.D.-sponsored young farmers' training school and a reforestation project. On the flight from Niamey to Fort Lamy, I stopped for several hours in the desert town of Zinder where I had the opportunity to observe life in this historic area as well as to learn of the repercussions the Nigerian civil war is having on the economy of Niger.

Chad (June 13-16).—The Chadian Government spared no effort in its hospitality. My visit was productive as well as enjoyable. I met with President Tombalbaye, Foreign Minister Baroum and Minister of National Economy Abdoulaye Lamana, with whom I discussed local and regional political and economic problems. President Tombalbaye provided his personal airplane to visit Mao, the capital of the ancient Kingdom of Bornu and Bol, where I saw the progress of the Lake Chad land reclamation project. I also saw the work of the Peace Corps and was especially impressed by an ox-drawn pump, designed by the volunteers, which greatly facilitated local irrigation efforts.

Central African Republic (June 16-18).—In Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, I had an opportunity to discuss the excellent state of U.S.-CAR relations with President Bokassa, Acting Foreign Minister Lavodrama and other government officials. In two radio interviews, I was able—as in other African centers—to express USG friendship to the Central African people. I observed several A.I.D. project activities, met with U.S. missionaries and visited a diamond cutting factory, jointly owned by the CAR Government and an American diamond firm.

Cameroon (June 18-21).—My visit to the Federal Republic of Cameroon was extremely fruitful, both in revealing the basic warmth of relations between our two countries and in giving us a chance to exchange views on many subjects of common interest. Foreign Minister Nko'o accompanied me throughout my visit to Cameroon's three principal cities—Yaounde, Buea and Douala, and attended a luncheon of American businessmen in the latter city. Vice President Foncha, the Foreign Minister, and Prime Ministers Muna of West Cameroon and Tchoungui of East Cameroon were among my many hosts. I also had an opportunity to observe U.S. A.I.D. projects and the excellent work of Peace Corps volunteers and American missionaries in Cameroon.

Gabon (June 21-23).—In Gabon in addition to holding discussions with President Bongo and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development Planning, I saw firsthand some of the great economic progress being made. I visited Port Gentil, location of one of the world's largest plywood factories, inspected the Shell Oil fields at Gamba and spent a night at the site of the Franco-American manganese mine (COMLOG), 49% of whose stock is owned by the U.S. Steel Corporation. While in Libreville I also visited the church which was built by the first missionaries to Gabon, who arrived in 1842. The original church is still in regular use as are the original pews, which were sent to Gabon from Massachusetts. In addition to U.S. Steel, American oil companies are conducting explorations in Gabon, and the Bethlehem Steel Company owns 50% of the company (SOMIFER) which has been given the concession to exploit Gabon's immense iron ore reserves at Mekambo.

Congo (K) (June 23-27 and June 30-July 3).—When I visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I found the country to be making encouraging progress in its efforts to rebuild its economy, to strengthen its internal security, and to move forward into a developmental phase. I was able to supplement my very useful conversations with President Mobutu and his principal ministers with visits to Lubumbashi, Kolwezi, Kisangani, Bukavu and Goma. The economic reform, which the Congolese Government undertook last year under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund, is putting goods onto the market and reviving agriculture, although efforts are hampered by the lack of a viable transportation infrastructure. Nevertheless, the outlook for a continued increase in Congolese exports is excellent. While the Congo still has many problems to overcome, I was most encouraged by the improvement in the business climate and the determination and dedication which the Congolese leaders have shown in meeting the problems squarely even when considerable sacrifice was involved. I was also shown during my visit to eastern Congo that, in spite of the succession of disturbances which have ravaged this region over the last few years, the Congolese people are energetically and effectively working to restore the economy of the area. I helped the Congolese celebrate their independence day in Bukavu, the scene of the defeat of the mercenaries which was aided by the American loan of three C-130's to transport Congolese troops to the area. I then travelled by road from there to Goma and on through the eastern Congo to Uganda, illustrating that security has been restored to this much ravaged area. I was greatly encouraged by the progress I saw and, if present trends continue, there is every reason to believe that the Congo can realize its great promise as one of the most advanced countries in tropical Africa.

Rwanda (June 27-29).—My visit to Rwanda, a country with which the United States has always enjoyed most amicable relations, was enlightening and valuable. I engaged in substantive discussions on various issues affecting Rwandan-American relations with a number of Rwandan leaders. I was impressed by the efforts made by these leaders in the economic and social fields. It is these efforts which have permitted the nation to make steady progress since independence in spite of substantial obstacles caused by her geographic position, size, and density of population.

Burundi (June 29-30).—My visit to Bujumbura came at a time when the relations between the United States and Burundi have taken a decided turn for the better. They are expected to become even more cordial with the arrival soon of a new American Ambassador in Bujumbura. In my talks with Burundi leaders,

including President Micombero, it was stressed by both sides that the good relations between our two countries are founded on the basis of mutual respect for each other's views and our mutual interest in seeing Burundi's continued economic progress. In Burundi, as elsewhere on my trip, I was impressed by the serious and effective manner in which the country is concentrating its efforts on solving the problem of economic development.

Uganda (July 3-4).—I was most pleased to renew my acquaintance with Uganda, which is making impressive progress. The contrast in the excellence of southern Uganda's road system with the underdeveloped routes in the adjacent areas is indeed dramatic and illustrative of how importantly transportation looms in the economies of African countries. From southwestern Uganda I flew to the capital, Kampala, where I had discussions with President Obote and Foreign Minister Odaka. Uganda had recently played host to peace talks between the Government of Nigeria and breakaway Biafra. I was able to learn at firsthand of the constructive efforts of President Obote and Foreign Minister Odaka to contribute to a constructive solution to the Nigerian problem.

Senegal (June 8-11).—After a visit to Nigeria, on which I will comment in a minute, my last stop in Africa was Dakar, where I had a most friendly and encouraging meeting with President Senghor and other Senegalese leaders. Our modest aid program in Senegal is making a definite contribution to the country's development and is greatly appreciated by the President and the people. Faced with a problem of student and worker riots in late May, President Senghor is now busily engaged in dealing with the causes of this unrest. As it was everywhere in Africa, my reception in Senegal was a concrete demonstration of the friendly feelings the leaders and people of Africa have for the United States and their sincere desire to develop close and friendly relations with us.

Nigeria.—My visit to Lagos, July 4-8, as well as brief stops in Paris, Geneva and London en route to the United States at the end of my trip, permitted me to gauge more accurately the dimensions of the tragic problem which besets Nigeria and to talk with officials—such as those of the International Committee of the Red Cross at Geneva—concerning methods of rapidly extending humanitarian help to those who are innocently suffering as a result of the hostilities. I return from this trip even more impressed both by the seriousness of the problem, the necessity of reestablishing peace in this war torn country and the urgent need for immediate humanitarian assistance to its civilians, especially its children.

General Gowan emphasized to me his strong desire to reach a peaceful settlement and his willingness, which was subsequently communicated to the Red Cross and OAU, to facilitate the movement of humanitarian supplies to the affected areas. It is my strong hope that Colonel Ojukwu will respond to the Red Cross and OAU urgings to make this possible.

The tragedy of the civil war which continues to rage in Nigeria, and particularly the suffering of innocent civilians on both sides, was the source of great concern among virtually all the African leaders with whom I talked. Their overwhelming desire, like ours, is for the earliest possible end to the war and the suffering. Many of them have been working behind the scenes toward that goal for some time, and now the efforts of the Consultative Committee on Nigeria of the Organization of African Unity, composed of the heads of state of Cameroon, the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia and Niger, appear to have made significant progress.

We are of course greatly encouraged by the news from Niamey over the weekend that both sides have now agreed to resume negotiations to end the war. Preliminary discussions are to take place in Niamey, with President Diori of Niger as chairman. Then, when the details are worked out, substantive talks are to follow in Addis Ababa under the auspices of the OAU Committee, of which Emperor Haile Selassie is chairman. Although serious differences continue, we are hopeful that these talks will fare better than those earlier and bring an end to casualties and destruction.

This will require a high degree of statesmanship, tolerance and realism. I found everywhere on my trip a growing alarm over the Nigerian conflict, however, and a growing conviction that Africans must help solve it. We share that view and believe that the talks scheduled in Addis Ababa are an important step in that direction. We hope fervently for the success of these talks.

Of even more immediate urgency is the problem of getting relief supplies to the suffering on both sides. Although the political impasse which prevents free movement of relief supplies into the secessionist area has not yet been fully overcome, a major relief effort by the International Committee of the Red Cross is under way. That effort has the full cooperation and support of the United States Government, as well as many other governments and private voluntary organizations.

As the President made clear in his statement of July 11, our intention is not to interfere in Nigerian military or political affairs, but to alleviate the suffering of innocent persons on both sides.

The need is great and urgent. We are far from satisfied at the amounts of relief supplies which thus far have reached the suffering, but are working urgently with the ICRC and other governments to find a means of breaking the bottleneck now caused by the failure to reach agreement on how to get supplies through the lines of fighting. In the meantime, ICRC stockpiles are growing, and we are hopeful for an early agreement among all concerned which will permit adequate supplies to flow to the needy wherever they are.

The U.S. contribution to Nigerian relief, including estimated donations of \$2 million from private sources, has now reached \$7 million, including a Government donation of 5,500 tons of food worth \$2.7 million to UNICEF approved in July. In addition, Secretary Rusk has informed the ICRC that we are providing a reserve fund of \$1 million for that body to draw on in meeting Nigerian relief needs. This contribution should be particularly useful in giving the ICRC flexibility to procure vehicles, charter ships and aircraft, and purchase or lease other equipment for rapid deployment to the areas of need.

We recognize that the implementation of an effective relief program in Nigeria is an enormous enterprise. The ICRC is expanding its organization to carry out such a program and has just named Mr. Auguste Lindt, the Swiss Ambassador to Moscow and formerly UN High Commissioner for Refugees, as the High Commissioner of Nigerian relief operations.

A truly effective relief effort requires the full cooperation of both federal and rebel officials, for there are thousands of desperately needy people in both areas. I am confident that such cooperation will be forthcoming, for, as the President said on July 11, "mass starvation that can be prevented must not be allowed to go on." We shall continue to cooperate in every way possible with the ICRC emergency relief effort to achieve this result.

Mr. Chairman, I have given special attention to the Nigerian question, since it is one which concerns us all deeply and in which the Committee has a special interest. We should all work to mitigate the effect of civil war on the innocent and to bring hostilities to an end. I would like, at the same time, to return to the trends in Africa which I outlined at the beginning of my remarks. African leaders are undismayed by the admittedly major problems they face, for they have an increasing sense of direction in their efforts and they are using their resources with greater effectiveness. These developments portend better government, economic growth and individual progress. Along with the sense of urgency of particular problems I would like to leave with this Committee the sense of encouragement I draw from these general patterns. Within this perspective, I believe that the United States can develop constructive policies designed to meet the needs both of our national interest and that of the African nations.

Mr. O'HARA. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for a very encouraging report.

I know of your great personal concern for Nigeria, having been our Ambassador there, and your deep affection for the people of Nigeria. On the whole I take your report to be one of optimism.

Mr. PALMER. Yes.

Mr. O'HARA. I mean with regard to Nigeria.

Mr. PALMER. I think that it is one of optimism, Mr. Chairman. There are many difficulties that lie ahead, but I must say that I was encouraged by my talks with General Gowan and other officials to believe that they, too, regard Ibos as being a full and essential part of Nigeria, that they want to see an end to the bloodshed, and they do want to see an honorable settlement of this problem.

They are, of course, insistent upon maintaining the unity of the country.

It is my very strong hope that within this framework both sides will be able to reach understanding and accommodation that will result in an honorable peace and a safe and effective reintegration of the very important Ibo element of the population into Nigeria.

Mr. O'HARA. I noted with much satisfaction that you stress that African solutions must come to African problems.

Mr. PALMER. I do believe this very firmly, Mr. Chairman. I have said from the beginning of the Nigerian conflict that I did not think that it was going to yield a peaceful solution except within an African framework.

In saying this I do not derogate at all from the very constructive and useful efforts that have been made by the Commonwealth Secretariat, the many influences that other powers outside Africa have had on these constructive influences, but this is a Nigerian problem first; it is an African problem second. I think that the increase in African concern with respect to this problem has been a constructive element in moving things toward a solution.

Mr. O'HARA. I trust, Mr. Secretary, that your position in that will be made well known to the American people and to the people of all of Africa. We are well-wishers and we will cooperate in every possible way we can but we will never force our own notions of solutions to African problems.

Mr. PALMER. I agree, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O'HARA. Mrs. Bolton.

Mrs. BOLTON. Who is the Diamond firm you mentioned earlier?

Mr. PALMER. I will have to supply it for the record, Mrs. Bolton. [It is Diamond Distributors, jointly owned by Diamond Distributors, Inc., of New York, and the Central African Republic Government.]

Mrs. BOLTON. I was interested in your mentioning the Port Gentil plywood factory. It has grown a great deal since I was there years ago.

Mr. PALMER. Yes, it has.

Mrs. BOLTON. What is the proportion of Africans that they use there? Do they have many?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, I believe that the proportion of Africans is increasing; perhaps not as fast in Gabon as in other areas.

Mrs. BOLTON. When we were there there were only two whites.

Mr. PALMER. I think at the management level it is still largely European.

Mrs. BOLTON. I am surprised to hear you say it is mostly white in management because they had hoped they would have very little need of the Westerner.

Mr. PALMER. There is a large African component certainly.

Mrs. BOLTON. Uganda and all these lovely areas you mentioned—trees come up from the bottom of these deep valleys and they are all brilliant abloom.

Mr. PALMER. It is certainly some of the most beautiful country in the world.

Mrs. BOLTON. Who is the new Ambassador to Bujumbura?

Mr. PALMER. George Renchard. He was consul general in Bermuda. He was confirmed by the Senate the other day. He will be going out to his post next month.

Mrs. BOLTON. What about the hospitals in Bujumbura?

Mr. PALMER. I did not have an opportunity to see any of the hospitals there, Mrs. Bolton. I was there a comparatively short period of time.

Mrs. BOLTON. The situation has been very bad there.

Mr. PALMER. Yes; but I was very encouraged. I think President Micombero now has control of things, is giving direction to the new Government. I was very impressed by the fact that so many Hutus and Tutsis are working together in the Government. Some of the younger ministers that I met there are very impressive young men.

Mrs. BOLTON. I am glad to hear that. It was some 2 years ago when it was very bad.

Mr. PALMER. That is right.

Mrs. BOLTON. All the supplies sent in were taken over by Government people and sold, and the poor little hospitals didn't even have a bandage. They had nothing.

Our consul general's wife and I are great pals, and we arranged with the Red Cross to get some things there to the hospital. The nuns have been absolutely marvelous.

The mother superior went back to Belgium after some of this was over to get a rest, but she just cannot wait to get back.

The nuns who have gone back are indescribable. It is good for the world; is it not?

Mr. PALMER. Things seem to have quieted down. There has been a great deal of dissidence on the border between Burundi and the Congo. That has practically disappeared now.

There is one small pocket left in the area and both the Burundi and Congolese authorities are cooperating to clear that up.

Mrs. BOLTON. How about the Chinese in there?

Mr. PALMER. The Chinese are not officially represented there, and there is not too much evidence of Chinese activity in there. It has been more a case of the Cubans from time to time.

I think that is now under control.

Mrs. BOLTON. There has been a very fine hospital up in Kampala. Did you hear anything of that?

Mr. PALMER. No; I had only a very few hours in Kampala. I flew up from the south.

Mrs. BOLTON. Training nurses as well as doctors there. Hugh Cairns' son was there and one of his daughters was also there for a while doing research.

Mr. PALMER. I am generally familiar with the institution but I did not visit it this time. I saw it from the outside. It is a beautiful building.

Mrs. BOLTON. I saw it from the inside and it was wonderful even way back there.

Mr. PALMER. I will get to it next time.

Mrs. BOLTON. The Biafra situation is very much on my mind. I know many Biafrans and Nigerians and I find myself rather fond of them.

Why were we so long sending food? Why did we wait until so many died?

Mr. PALMER. I think, Mrs. Bolton, we were among the first to send food there. We have been sending a great deal in all along through the private relief organizations who have been very active in the field.

The really acute period has only arisen during the last couple months and I think we have been reasonably anticipatory on it. The great problem has been how to move it across the lines.

Mrs. BOLTON. And it is perfectly ridiculous for them to say that you can send it in by roads. There are no roads.

Mr. PALMER. There are roads that are available.

Mrs. BOLTON. Not in the rainy season.

Mr. PALMER. No; the road coming down from the north—there are difficulties in moving it—but it can be moved. This has not been the problem. The problem really has been a political problem. So far as land movement is concerned, it has been the position taken by the Biafran Government in refusing to facilitate the reception of the food and movement of it through the lines. The Federal Government has made clear its willingness to move in this direction.

The Red Cross, I believe, accepts this as being a genuine offer and has been trying to persuade the Biafrans to cooperate from their side to receive it.

There are great limitations in movement by air.

Mrs. BOLTON. I know; but I am in great sympathy with the Biafrans. They don't trust the Nigerians.

Mr. PALMER. I think this is a factor and obviously a very important factor. But this food would go in under the auspices of the International Red Cross which certainly—

Mrs. BOLTON. They can do all kinds of things to it on the way.

Mr. PALMER. Mrs. Bolton, I must say that I don't think there would be any effort on the part of the Federal Government to tamper with that food.

Mrs. BOLTON. I am not at all sure. On the part of the Biafrans as well as the Nigerians there is not the same regard for human life that we have. They don't consider it as we do at all.

Mr. PALMER. I think that they do, Mrs. Bolton.

Mrs. BOLTON. You do?

Mr. PALMER. I think they are seriously disturbed. I think all Nigerians are disturbed about the loss of life.

Mrs. BOLTON. Thousands upon thousands have died.

Mr. PALMER. I think they are trying their best to minimize it but I think a civil war in any context is probably the most bitter of conflicts.

Mrs. BOLTON. And of course some Biafrans have been very arrogant. Some of the ones that I know.

They are very certain of their point of view.

Mr. PALMER. I think all people have their characteristics; but I really think, Mrs. Bolton—I do not believe for a minute, there would be any conscious effort to deliver anything other than food. I am sure—

Mrs. BOLTON. I am glad to have your sense of it. It has been disturbing.

Mr. PALMER. What may well have happened is that supplies of milk—which if it is not properly prepared can give diarrhea and other intestinal upsets; and there may have been some incorrect preparation of things of this kind which may have given rise to reports of this kind.

Mrs. BOLTON. I know that is possible, too.

Mr. PALMER. But I do not believe that there is any directed effort toward this end at all. On the contrary I found humanitarian concern very strong in Lagos.

Mr. O'HARA. Mr. Diggs?

Mr. DIGGS. Mr. Secretary, are you saying that you do not believe that there is any basis for the pathological fear on the part of the Biafrans that reintegration would result in a genocide or something comparable to it?

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?

Mr. PALMER. I would say, Mr. Congressman, that I think there are several dimensions to it. I think in the first place that 10 years ago expectations ran awfully high in the United States that there would be instant stability in Africa. There has not been. Problems have arisen.

I do not think there has been any diminution in the interest or the excitement. I think that people have come to realize and to understand that it will be a much more difficult and longer range problem than they perhaps thought at the beginning.

There is, of course, a problem with respect to resources. I myself am very seriously disturbed, as I think my statement implied, as to how responsive the United States will be able to be to assisting in the task of developing Africa unless more resources are made available and unless more flexibility is introduced into the administration of our aid program to get away from many requirements in the current legislation.

I think this is terribly important because I think we must be responsive. We cannot abandon Africa to the former metropolitan powers. Their ability to be responsive is also diminishing. This is a field, I think, in which the United States has to play an important role if we are to live up to our commitments on the continent. To what extent this is a function of Vietnam it is difficult to say. It is obviously a function of Vietnam to some extent, because in the competition for funds Vietnam has very high priority.

It is also a function of some of our balance-of-payments problems, of the necessity for general cutbacks in spending, and a whole variety of factors.

As I indicated before, I think the Africans are understanding of this on the short term. I tried to emphasize to them that our economy is essentially healthy. What we are making here are adjustments to keep it healthy.

I think they continue to hope very strongly that it flows from that that as we restore the health of our economy and make these adjustments that are necessary to keep it that way, that we will be able to resume a larger flow of resources to Africa.

As I say, I think it is essential that we do.

Mr. DIGGS. I have one final question, Mr. Chairman. How many Afro-American Ambassadors do we have in Africa now and to what countries are they assigned?

Mr. PALMER. We have Clint Knox in Dahomey; we have Elliott Skinner in Upper Volta; Franklin Williams, as you know, recently resigned as Ambassador to Ghana, and Samuel Adams has just been appointed as Ambassador to Niger. I think that is it.

Mr. DIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. BOLTON. Mr. Chairman, may I include something at that point on this problem? Has the feeling disappeared that I found very rampant when we first began sending ambassadors to the new countries? Some of the countries felt that if it was not a white man we were considering them as second-rate nations. Did you run into that, Mr. Diggs?

Mr. PALMER. I honestly have not.

Mr. DIGGS. I have not from my conversations.

Mrs. BOLTON. It is gone, then. That is fine.

I know that at the beginning it was very strong.

Mr. PALMER. I have not encountered it at all.

Mrs. BOLTON. Good. That is what I encountered and I had it thrown in my face quite a number of times by the different ones. That is not the way we feel about it at all.

Mr. O'HARA. Mr. Morse.

Mr. MORSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am reminded not so much by your testimony, Mr. Palmer, as the earlier appearances of Secretary McNamara coming before the Foreign Affairs Committee and reporting on Vietnam with sanguine attitudes which certainly the record did not bear out.

With the exception of your report on Nigeria, I find nothing but optimism and confidence in your report. I am sure that although there is no intention on your part to mislead the committee, there must be some problems in Africa. I would like to hear about some of those problems.

Mr. PALMER. There are problems in Africa. I was addressing myself primarily to those areas that I visited.

Mr. MORSE. Just which 16 areas did you visit, because with the exception of Nigeria, everything is sweetness and light?

Mr. PALMER. No, there are real problems in Sierra Leone where the Government is making a very real effort to bring the country back from military rule and to relaunch it onto the path of civilian rule once again.

The problems there derive, I would say, primarily from the fact that the army is not yet back fully under the control of the Government. This is causing problems. Nevertheless, I think they are making progress.

I think the difficulties are pretty well known, Mr. Congressman. I think the story that does not get told very often of some of the constructive developments that are taking place, which perhaps accounts for the emphasis in my report.

Congo has terrible problems with respect to internal transportation, for example, but it is trying to get a hold of these problems. It is reorganizing the major instrument for lake and river transportation within the country, and I think is making progress. It has great needs with respect to the development of its road system.

There is no good developing agriculture, as the Congo is emphasizing at the present time, if you then cannot move the products of agriculture to the market. As far as the problems that plagued the Congo in the past are concerned, and this is a rather key area in Africa, the level of dissidence in the Congo is at the lowest point it has ever been.

As I indicated, I traveled all through the area myself by road. I saw it at first hand. It is making progress.

Guinea has tremendous problems in economic development, but there is one thing that has been done in Guinea and that is that they have organized a society. I think this is a deliberate priority on their part. I think it is something that I have not seen tried elsewhere in Africa. What I was trying to say in that part is that the problems of economic development are all there, but the society now is organized,

and as Guinea moves into the next phase, particularly with the Boke project which will be an investment of \$170 million in the country, it has a real opportunity to continue to move forward. The problems are there. They are being identified. I think that progress is being made on them. This is all I intended to convey.

Mr. MORSE. I do not criticize your report of progress, sir. I just felt that the report was incomplete without some larger reference to the problems that do exist.

You mention nowhere in your report of the effect of South African affairs on black Africa. Could you comment on that, please, sir?

Mr. PALMER. Yes. I think it is an obvious and continuing concern. It causes a lot of moral problems in the area I am talking about and has its greatest impact, of course, when we get down into the southern part of the continent, particularly as it affects Zambia, and the former High Commissioner Territories of Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland, which are, as you know, very much a part of this general region. It does pose very strong moral issues for the rest of Africa. It poses issues of support for nationalist movements. They cannot accept the situation that this area should be immune from the process of change that has characterized the other five-sixths of the continent. This becomes a very strong moral issue with them.

Mr. MORSE. How have U.S. postures, vis-a-vis South Africa, affected relations with the black African countries you visited?

Mr. PALMER. I believe they sincerely believe we mean what we say when we support the principle of self-determination and majority rule. But they are, of course, impatient with respect to the pace of change. I think they are prepared to be patient within certain limits, but unless further movement does take place within the next few years that this will become an increasing problem in our relationships with the rest of Africa.

Mr. MORSE. The very purpose of title IX of the foreign aid bill is to indicate to the extent feasible and possible that the United States should assist in doing the kinds of things that Toure is doing in Guinea; that is, to build a society. To what extent has the African Bureau undertaken activities which would perhaps lead to this end?

Mr. PALMER. We are working very closely with AID in an effort to identify those situations which we think have the greatest prospect for success. In the first place it is very difficult for the United States to do this without involving the countries concerned. We are trying our best to work with governments. I think that various studies have been done on this that are available to the committee. The primary focus for these is in AID, although in view of the political aspects of the problem, we do work very closely with AID on these matters. I think you know that certain countries have been designated to try to make a major effort with them.

Mr. MORSE. What was the level of foreign assistance to Africa in its entirety for the fiscal years 1966, 1967, and 1968? Do you have those figures available?

Mr. PALMER. I do not have them immediately available.

(The following table was supplied:)

U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO AFRICA
[Net obligations and loan authorizations; in millions of dollars]

	Fiscal year						
	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968
AID.....	315.0	239.1	189.0	149.7	169.5	184.1	157.2
Food for freedom.....	99.0	209.5	133.3	118.0	137.7	165.3	149.3
Export-Import Bank long-term loans.....	67.5	9.7	12.2	34.5	44.2	14.0	49.4
Other U.S. economic programs.....	7.3	14.9	24.9	27.2	32.7	25.7	22.9
Total, economic.....	488.8	473.2	359.4	329.4	384.1	389.1	378.8
Military assistance.....	23.7	26.1	28.4	17.7	21.9	31.2	22.6
Total, economic and military.....	512.5	499.3	387.8	347.1	406.0	420.3	410.4

¹ Approximate.

Mr. MORSE. Has there been a significant reduction year by year?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, there has been a steady reduction.

Mr. MORSE. You say on page 4 that—

While they accepted my frank explanations as to the reasons for this diminution, there is a danger if we are not able within a reasonable period to at least restore past levels of aid and to introduce more flexibility with respect to our programs.

What were your frank explanations?

Mr. PALMER. My frank explanations, Mr. Congressman, were those that I outlined a few minutes ago, that the heavy expenses which the United States is bearing in connection with its international activities, our balance-of-payments problems, and the budgetary pressures that we face here in the United States, and the necessity from the point of view of our own interests and general world interests of making the adjustments that are required to keep our budgetary and our balance-of-payments situation in a strong position.

Mr. MORSE. I notice, sir, that you said in Gambia you infer that the Gambians shared with us a similar world view. Does this imply a diminution of French influence in Gambia?

Mr. PALMER. Gambia has a British background and tradition.

Mr. MORSE. Of course.

Mr. PALMER. What I mean is that on most international issues the Gambia traditionally is with us.

Mr. MORSE. What were the attitudes of most of French Africa vis-a-vis U.S. policies?

Mr. PALMER. I would say they vary a good deal.

I would say that there is a much higher degree of understanding on such issues as Vietnam than there has been in the past. Certain countries, of course, adhere more closely to French positions than others. I would be glad to go into those in executive session.

Mr. MORSE. Very well, sir.

Is there considerable interest in the South West-African situation?

Mr. PALMER. This was not raised as the South West Africa situation. I would say it was subsumed in general concerns about the whole situation in southern Africa, and the Portuguese territories and Rhodesia.

Mr. MORSE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O'HARA. Mr. Tunney.

Mr. TUNNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Palmer, what would you say were the two or three main policy objectives in Nigeria of our foreign policy?

Mr. PALMER. I would say the first and most immediate objective is to try to get effective humanitarian assistance available to all those on both sides who are affected by the civil war.

I would say that our second objective is to see just as early as possible a peaceful resolution of the problem within the framework of the maintenance of the unity of Nigeria, which we have supported from the beginning, and to see this worked out in such a way as to provide protection to all of the peoples that inhabit Nigeria.

Thirdly, from this point to see Nigeria resume its potential in the field of economic development to bring about a better life for the people of Nigeria.

Mr. TUNNEY. I think that is a very articulate expression of our foreign policy goals. However, in Vietnam we proclaimed that in a conflict between two political subdivisions of one people that there should be self-determination by peoples of both subdivisions, particularly in South Vietnam. In Nigeria we have a civil war involving mainly tribal rivalries, with apparently a desire of the Ibos to secede from the Federal Government and establish an independent state.

Why do we have a different theory of self-determination in Vietnam than in Nigeria?

Mr. PALMER. The problem of self-determination obviously has limits to it. I think the situation in South Vietnam is very much complicated by the fact that there are other forces that are at work here. There are outside forces, which I do not think is the case with respect to Nigeria. Granted that there are four African countries who have supported Biafra and do recognize it, I would not say that the weight of opinion within the rest of Africa supports this position. I think there are great dangers that if the principle of self-determination is carried to its logical conclusion. Instead of having 40 countries in Africa, that number could be greatly augmented beyond the 40. I do not think it is up to the United States to support secessionist movements of this kind. I think it is primarily up to the countries in the area concerned to bring about the solution to this problem in an African and Nigerian context.

Mr. TUNNEY. What you are saying is that it is a pragmatic evaluation based on the circumstances that exist in the continent of Africa. That self-determination as a policy, which we proclaim and seemed to have proclaimed since Woodrow Wilson, is going to be tempered by a pragmatic decision that it would not be in the case of Nigeria.

Mr. PALMER. I think that self-determination, as it has been generally applied, is related primarily to the decolonization process. I think there are other elements besides the element of self-determination in the Vietnamese situation that differentiate it from the Nigerian situation. There is a factor of aggression. I would not say there is a factor of aggression here. Nigeria was one country. One part is trying to split off.

Mr. TUNNEY. The same thing could be said for Vietnam. When you get into that kind of an argument, there is a time framework.

Mr. PALMER. I did not raise the argument.

Mr. TUNNEY. Vietnam was one country for 2,000 years; and, in 1954, it was made two different countries or two political subdivisions. So I suppose since 1954 we could say there have been two independent nations in Vietnam, which really never existed before. In Nigeria, when did Nigeria become independent?

Mr. PALMER. 1960.

Mr. TUNNEY. So there has been one nation in Nigeria since 1960. However, it is my understanding that there has been tribal rivalry in Nigeria going back into prehistory, probably for centuries.

Mr. PALMER. There have been tribal difficulties in a great many countries of the world, including a great many in Western Europe.

Mr. TUNNEY. Don't you think that the Biafrans feel that they have as much right to be independent as perhaps the other tribes in Nigeria feel they have a right to keep them a part of the federal structure?

Mr. PALMER. I think obviously they do have ambitions of this kind. As I say, you have to ask yourself where it is all going to end if anybody who wants to break away can do so on the basis of a perfectly free choice.

Mr. TUNNEY. But you will agree that the situation in Nigeria is quite different than it is in other countries in Africa.

Mr. PALMER. I would not say it is essentially different from what it is in the Sudan. I would not want to go into it in open hearing; but I would be prepared in executive session to say that I think there are other countries where there are very severe tribal strains.

Mr. TUNNEY. Do you feel that the Federal Government has done everything that it can to facilitate the transportation of food into Biafra?

Mr. PALMER. You cannot say that it has done everything it can because you have not been able to test it yet. You won't be able to test it until you get the agreement on principles that you need from the other side in order to test the whole range of arrangements. But I would say that I do accept at face value the expressed willingness of the Federal Government to open up land corridors going in there for the movement of food. It is my understanding that the Red Cross and other agencies also accept this at face value. The problem is that there has not as yet been a response to this on the other side that has permitted the trucks to roll.

Mr. TUNNEY. What about by sea?

Mr. PALMER. Biafra no longer has any seacoast. There is no longer any question of a naval blockade. I have a map here if you would like to see it, Mr. Congressman. As you see the Federal forces now have the country completely encircled. So there is no sea access to Biafra at the present time. The only two means of getting it in there are by plane and by land.

Mr. TUNNEY. What about by plane?

Mr. PALMER. There are very real limitations on this. There are political problems in connection with it. There are also logistic problems. At the present time the estimate is that you need 200 tons of food. The only possible airfields there are sections of road that have been converted into temporary landing strips. It would require a really

very major and very expensive and very risky airlift involving a large number of planes to move that amount in every day. The expense of this also becomes a factor, whereas there is no reason why substantial quantities cannot be moved across by land.

Mr. TUNNEY. When you say "by land," are you referring to the land down on the coast and a corridor that would come from one of the seaports?

Mr. PALMER. No; they are talking primarily about moving it down from the north, and down into this area.

Mr. TUNNEY. Wouldn't it make more sense to have it move from the south?

Mr. PALMER. There are all sorts of complications in this problem. One is that the southern sector is still somewhat active militarily. The port facilities at Port Harcourt are still not able to be fully utilized because there are vessels sunk in that area and the channel has silted up over the period of the last year.

Also, the airfield has been damaged.

Another possibility is to move it in through Calabar. The trouble with this is that you have to get it across the river and the ferry service there involves difficulties. Then when you get up into the Ikot Ekpene area, you are in the area where some of the most active fighting is going on at the present time on both sides.

Things are quieter in the northern sector. From a logistical point of view the indications are that it could be moved easier and faster into that area than it can in the other areas. There is less dislocation there.

Mr. TUNNEY. Is our Government satisfied that the Federal Government is doing everything that is possible to facilitate the movement of food into Biafra?

Mr. PALMER. I think our feeling is that the Federal Government has really made a very major effort here to meet the requirements of the situation.

Mr. TUNNEY. We are satisfied with the major effort?

Mr. PALMER. We are satisfied with the extent of that effort, yes.

It seems quite clear to me that at this moment the major problem really lies on the other side. I think that this is true of the ICRC and I think it is the view of the Organization of African Unity which has also been working on this problem. I would hope very much that arrangements could be worked out to bring more of it in by air, particularly during daylight hours. This has not been worked out as yet because of the fact that the Federal Government does insist that any arrangements that are worked out would not permit the introduction of weapons. It is not that they are concerned about the Red Cross flying the weapons or anything of the kind, but if a lot of aircraft are moving in the area there is some concern that weapons could be brought in to any field that was designated for humanitarian supplies. I think the Federal Government is willing to be flexible in this respect, as Mr. Thompson indicated yesterday in his statement before the British House of Commons.

Mr. TUNNEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O'HARA. Mr. Secretary, as usual you have made a large contribution to the work of this subcommittee.

Would it be convenient for you to return at a later date for an executive session?

Mr. PALMER. Yes, I would be delighted to.

Mr. O'HARA. The subcommittee is interested in hearing you also in executive session. Your prepared statement, if agreeable to you, I will put in the Congressional Record of today. I think it should get to the American public immediately. It is very reassuring.

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. O'HARA. The subcommittee now stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 11:30 a.m., the subcommittee adjourned.)



