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NSC INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP
FOR AFRICA

PAPER I

This paper considers relief needs in Nigeria and Biafra and alternative US approaches and programs aimed at expediting and enlarging urgently the flow of relief to Biafra. It sets forth only technical aspects of the actions without discussing political consequences. These consequences are outlined in the second paper, which deals with the range of basic policy choices open to the US. A third paper considers the background of the conflict.

RELIEF NEEDS IN BIAFRA AND NIGERIA

Firm data on overall requirements for food relief assistance are not available. There are conflicting reports from those operating in the area and it has not been possible to mount a comprehensive survey. The following is based on best estimates of A.I.D. and relief agencies.

Biafra

Population in need: Planning estimates range from 1.5 million in February to 3.5 million in June, out of a total population of 5-7 million. If intensive plantings in process are effective, there are some estimates of a 1.5 million maximum at any time.

Current situation:

- continuing protein shortage. Supply dependent on present airlift.
- possible general food shortage.
- relief groups now feeding 1.8 million.

Monthly Tonnage required:

- 30,000 tons maximum May-June
- 9,000 tons minimum May-June

Factor: 9,000 tons monthly feeds 1 million at minimum survival level 1500 calories per day.

Downgraded at 12-year intervals;
not automatically declassified

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Federal Territory (in Federal-held war area)

Population in need: Planning estimates 1 million in February to 2.5 million in June.

Current situation: Red Cross feeding 850,000

Monthly tonnage required: 5,000 to 19,000 tons.

Current Impasse

- Food stockpiled in Federal and offshore areas and en route is sufficient to meet estimated needs on both sides.
- Relief deliveries can be expanded only marginally under present political constraints on operating airlift or corridor proposals and given growing sensitivity to foreign relief personnel.

The US can choose among the following main approaches to increase the flow of relief to Biafra:

- (1) Agreement or acquiescence of each side independently.
- (2) Agreement between the sides.
- (3) Agreement or acquiescence of one side without the other.
- (4) Agreement of neither side.

These basic approaches are reflected in the relief courses discussed below.

ALTERNATE RELIEF COURSES:

Relief Course A - Present night church group airlift to Biafra from Sao Tome and International Red Cross (ICRC) airlift from Fernando Po and/or Dahomey; Red Cross supervised land delivery in FMG territory.

Maximum delivery - Biafra 8,000-10,000 tons monthly.
Airlift delivery to Biafra achieved maximum 4,000 tons in December but will expand with C-97s in full operation.

Equipment - 10-12 aircraft and 8 C-97s now available.

Cost to US (6 months) - \$29.8 million

~~SECRET/ENDIC~~Conditions

- Access to present airfields or alternate fields in neighboring countries.
- Availability and limitations of Uli airfield or alternate in Biafra. (Uli capacity 25-30 per night for relief and arms flights)
- FMG acquiescence to night flights and agreement to use of base fields as required by neighboring countries.

Relief Course B - Expanded present night airlift to maximum extent possible with new input aircraft and equipment. Maximum Delivery - Biafra 14,000 tons per month; (9,000 tons on Federal side)

Equipment: Add 4-6 additional C-97s replacing smaller capacity planes; 100 trucks and personnel for Federal area.

Cost to US (6 months) - \$35.2 million (provision of 4-6 additional C-97 type aircraft for Biafra airlift, road transport equipment and services for Red Cross in Federal area, and food).

Time Factor: 30-45 days to full operation.

Conditions:

- Access to present airfields or alternate fields in neighboring countries.
- Availability and limitations of Uli airfield or alternate in Biafra. (Uli capacity 25-30 per night for relief and arms flights)
- FMG acquiescence to night flights and agreement to use of base fields as required by neighboring countries.

Relief Course C - Daylight relief flights to FMG/Biafran agreed airstrip and strengthened relief operation in Federal area.

Maximum Delivery - Biafra 18,000 tons per month; (Federal area, 12,000-19,000 tons per month.)

Equipment: Add to Course B 100 5-ton trucks for transfer supplies to exchange point.

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Cost to US (6 months) - \$36.6 million

Time Factor - 30-45 days to full operation.

Conditions:

- Agreement FMG and Biafrans on use Obilagu airstrip in Federal territory with short land corridor into Biafra or on use Uli airstrip in Biafra.
- Access to present and additional base airfields.
- Red Cross-administered exchange corridor and arrangements.

Relief Course D - Land corridor through Federal territory to Biafra, and phase out airlift.

Maximum Delivery - 30,000 tons monthly to Biafra in optimum routes (e.g., via Calabar). Northern route suitable for small capacity only.

Equipment: 75 5-ton trucks; lighters, barges, and commercial LSTs in package contractor with US or European firm; present airlift until phased out.

Cost to US (6 months) - \$29.1 million.

Time Factor - 60-90 days to full operation.

Conditions:

- FMG/Biafran agreement.
- Cooperation on direct access to route for equipment and foreign personnel and minimal dependence on FMG resources.
- Red Cross administration of corridor and exchange point.

Relief Course E - River corridor through Federal territory to Biafra, and phase out airlift.

Maximum Delivery - 30,000 tons monthly to Biafra - during navigable summer months only.

Equipment: 30 250-ton barges; additional dock and storage facilities.

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Cost to US (6 months) - \$28.6 million.

Time Factor - 4 months to begin operations.

Conditions:

- FMG/Biafran agreement (Biafra proposed but FMG opposes for military reasons).
- Cooperation on direct access to route for equipment and foreign personnel and minimal dependence on FMG resources.
- Red Cross administration of corridor and exchange point.

Relief Course F - Airdrop to Biafra from foreign airfields.

Maximum Delivery - 18,000-20,000 tons (45-50 flights per day, 15-18 ton capacity aircraft)

Equipment: Add to Course B airdrop equipment and specialists.

Cost to US (6 months) - \$42 million

Time Factor - 30-45 days to full operation

Conditions:

- Access to airbases in pro-Biafran or neutral neighboring countries.
- No FMG interception of flights.
- Satisfactory Biafran ground control ensure food gets to people in need; can anticipate large inefficiencies and wastage.
- Alternatively, FMG agreement use Federal airfields.

SUMMATION OF U.S. RESOURCES REQUIRED AND THEIR AVAILABILITY

U.S. has provided \$23 million public and \$6.5 million private contributions of \$50 million total international donations.

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Maximum estimated requirement for Courses A - F would be:

	Committed To Date	Additional Requirement To August
PL 480 II Food	\$15.8 (70,000 tons)	<u>\$15-17.0</u>
Transport Services and Other Support	\$ 7.2	<u>\$12-26.0</u>

AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

Food - Available under PL 480 II.

Funds - Available within FY 1969 appropriations but Presidential determination may be necessary to shift appropriation categories to meet legislative authorities.

Transport Equipment - Transport equipment and contract services could be made available on short notice. Some additional C-97s with supporting equipment are available; commercial C-130s can be contracted, although the cost is three to four times higher than use C-97s.

There are C-130 aircraft assigned to the Tactical Air Command in the US training replacement combat crews for Southeast Asia, supporting contingency plans worldwide and providing unit rotation on temporary duty basis for Europe and Pacific areas. Diversion for any other missions would affect the US defense posture. Jet fuel for operation of C-130s is not available at existing fields. If US military C-130s are used, US forces would be required for their security.

ALTERNATIVES FOR LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION OF RELIEF ASSISTANCE

1. THE U.S. RELIEF EFFORT

Several Congressional proposals have called for a greater US effort. Some members of the Congress, notably Senator Kennedy, have pressed for a special Presidential representative to marshal US resources to take the lead in opening up relief routes and an active part in efforts to end the war as the most effective way to bring about relief. The ways an American representative might operate, as well as an alternative proposal for a Citizens Committee, are considered below. An American call for an international relief conference is also discussed.

There are three basic considerations in appraising the

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following alternatives on relief leadership and coordination:

(1) A prominent US Government role in coordination -- domestic or international -- makes sense only if we are prepared to undertake a more active (and more politically risky) relief effort than in the past. Otherwise, we may be open to the charge of making a "gesture" without practical significance.

(2) Thus, the decision on coordination should be taken in consonance with our general policy approach to the civil war.

(3) And finally, the mere appointment of a US coordinator -- to the degree this proposal has been made or supported by American public figures with distinct sympathies on the political issues of the war -- will be taken by the warring parties as a political and policy act of the new Administration. The arguments that follow concerning a coordinator are applicable whether he is appointed by the President or by the Secretary of State. There is, of course, the risk of involving Presidential prestige if the coordinator is his personal representative.

2. THE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF EFFORT

The conflicting political and military positions of the two sides are the principal obstacles to expanded relief arrangements, as outlined in Paper II. Moreover, deficiencies in coordination and leadership in the international relief effort have complicated the task of overcoming these obstacles. On the Federal side relief responsibility is vested in the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) working with the Nigerian Red Cross. In Biafra, operations are carried out separately by the ICRC and the Church groups.

Some have suggested that the UN fill the leadership and coordination role. However, the difficulty of separating the humanitarian from the political aspects, the lack of a UN mandate, the reluctance of the Secretary-General, and strong opposition by both sides and most African states to such UN leadership has made this approach unpromising.

PROPOSAL I - U.S. RELIEF COORDINATOR:

A. Purely domestic mandate to maximize the U.S. material and financial contribution to the international relief effort.

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PROS

1. Would be visible evidence that US was seeking to take steps to make our domestic coordination more effective.
2. Could effect some improvements in both coordination and priorities in relief.
3. Meets the point of view of those who want to limit direct US involvement and work through existing international institutions.
4. African reaction is likely to be minimal.

CONS

1. Naming of a coordinator would embody more form than substance.
2. Existing mechanisms are achieving desired results reasonably well.
3. Does not go nearly far enough to meet the demands for a direct US international leadership role -- hence would draw renewed criticism.
4. Since the relief problem is highly political, coordinator would bear the responsibility for maximizing relief but have no authority to deal with its constraints.

B. Extend the Coordinator's mandate to include a US negotiating role regarding relief operations in either of the following two ways:

(a) Working through ICRC, OAU or others

PROS

1. Would be consistent with the Pearson/Brooke Resolution
2. Would minimize direct US involvement.
3. Could strengthen the international relief effort.

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CONS

1. International institutions have little leverage with the parties and thus far have had little success in removing political obstacles to relief.
2. Would likely be interpreted by FMG and some Africans as a step towards deeper US involvement.
3. Would not relieve and in fact might intensify pressures for a direct US negotiating role with the parties.
4. May indicate to other donors that they can depend on the US while they make less efforts themselves.

(b) Working directly on the parties to the conflict

PROS

1. Would be reasonably responsive to more activist pressure groups.
2. Relates responsibility for mobilizing relief more directly to responsibility for pressing for arrangements to deliver relief.
3. US leverage could be brought directly to bear on both parties without the complication of intermediaries.

CONS

1. Could be interpreted as going beyond the Pearson/Brooke Resolution by those favoring a limit to direct US involvement.
2. US engagement in the political issues surrounding relief could lead to deeper involvement.
3. US leverage at best is limited and may not produce desired results.
4. Unless accompanied by support for one Nigeria, role of coordinator would be interpreted by FMG, Biafra and most Africans that US was veering toward a pro-Biafran policy.

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5. Might be resented by other relief donors.

C. Extend coordinator's role one step further to include a negotiating role in efforts to end the war as the most effective way to maximize relief.

The use of a coordinator for such an activity would necessarily be related to the policy option finally selected as described in Paper II. His usefulness in this respect as well would be clearly circumscribed by a number of the policy options. A coordinator under such circumstances might have no advantage over other instruments the US would employ to seek to end the war. Moreover, combining of relief and peace-making role may well damage the coordinator's relief role because of the strongly held political views of the parties.

The appointment of a coordinator to become directly involved in ending the war would clearly exceed the terms and intent of the Pearson/Brooke Resolution.

PROPOSAL II - APPOINTMENT OF A CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR COORDINATION

A further suggestion has been made that a citizens committee of a responsible group of Americans with an interest in both Africa and relief should be appointed to help coordinate and maximize the domestic US relief effort.

PROS

1. Would involve a wide spectrum of US public opinion and interested agencies in getting recommendations on relief policy and programs.
2. Would serve as a well publicized discussion forum in which relief agencies could raise problems and seek solutions.
3. Would be a vehicle for airing the political complexities involved in relief activities.
4. Might deflect, at least briefly, some domestic criticism of the US official relief effort.

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CONS

1. Would not address the real problem of political obstacles between the two sides.
2. Would probably be dominated by pressure groups with the result of turning a potential tool for action into another pressure group. If bias is evident, it may in fact complicate efforts to resolve the problem.
3. Would be cumbersome, subject to strong internal disagreements and perhaps unworkable.
4. Would not address the important problem of coordinating international activities.
5. Would be criticized as a political expedient designed to diminish domestic pressure upon the USG.

PROPOSAL III - INTERNATIONAL RELIEF CONFERENCE

The US could take the lead in seeking a meeting of high-level representatives of the UN, principal relief donor nations, and those international organizations involved in the relief negotiations (OAU, ICRC and Commonwealth Secretariat) for the purpose of (a) agreeing on a joint approach to the negotiation of new relief arrangements; and (b) appointing an internationally known figure to examine the problem and to negotiate relief arrangements on both sides. Such a conference would preferably be called at the instance of the International Red Cross.

PROS

1. Would carry out intent of Pearson/Brooke Resolution by mobilizing international concern in a common approach to relief problems.
2. Would achieve the purposes of a high-level relief negotiator without direct or sole US identification with, and responsibility for, his actions.

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3. Would provide a new negotiating personality free from the past problems and failures of existing organizations.
4. Ideally, would separate out time-consuming and controversial negotiating role, which would free ICRC to concentrate on more effective coordination of relief operations.

CONS

1. To extent ICRC is deprived of negotiating role, this may be interpreted as an indication of failure with consequent damage to ICRC prestige.
2. Would be difficult to insulate conference from Nigerian/Biafran political issues involved and from lobbying, including strong pressures from the voluntary agencies to protect their positions.
3. Conference or its designated coordinator may pursue a course on relief unacceptable to US policy objectives while the US is committed to support relief measures adopted.
4. Because of the criteria for participation, conference would appear in African eyes as being largely a white effort implying African impotence and outside interference.

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