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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
2000

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TEXT  
TAGS: PGOV, PINR, NG  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT OUSMANE'S HIRED-GUW TAKES  
ANOTHER LEGAL RUW AT OVERTURNING ELECTION RESULTS

REF: NIAMEY 000717

1. CONFIDENTIAL -- ENTIRE TEXT

2. QUESTION: WHAT DOES PRESIDENT OUSMANE NOW HAVE  
IN COMMON WITH CARLOS "THE JACKAL" AND KLAUS BARBIE?  
ANSWER: MAITRE JACQUES VERGES, THE FRENCH ATTORNEY  
WHO HAS ACHIEVED NOTORIETY FOR HIS LEGAL DEFENSE OF  
THE INDEFENSIBLE. PRESIDENT OUSMANE'S CDS PARTY-

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Change/classify to \_\_\_\_\_  
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DEFEATED IN THE JANUARY 12 LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS--  
HAS HIRED MAITRE VERGES TO MAKE ANOTHER LEGAL RUN AT  
OVERTURNING THE ELECTION RESULTS.

3. NIGERIENS HAVE REACTED WITH INDIGNATION TO  
MAITRE VERGES' WELL PUBLICIZED APPEARANCE IN NIAMEY  
OVER THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 10-12 TO PRESENT HIS  
BRIEF TO THE SUPREME COURT. THE DECISION TO BRING  
IN A HIRED GUN FROM FRANCE--ESPECIALLY ONE AS  
NOTORIOUS AS VERGES--HAS PROVOKED A NATIONALIST  
RESPONSE FROM THE MAN IN THE STREET. MOST EDUCATED  
NIGERIENS DO NOT TAKE WELL TO THE PERCEPTIONS--REAL  
OR IMAGINED--OF INTERFERENCE BY THE FORMER COLONIAL  
POWER NOR DO THEY THINK VERY HIGHLY OF THOSE  
NIGERIENS WHO TEND TURN TO FRANCE FOR ANSWERS.

4. AGGRAVATING THIS ANTI-COLONIALIST REACTION  
AGAINST VERGES IS THE FACT THAT THE SUPREME COURT  
HAS ALREADY RULED ON THE PRINCIPAL LEGAL ISSUE: THE  
VALIDITY OF THE EIGHT SEATS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY  
SEATS ALLOCATED TO SPECIAL ELECTORAL DISTRICTS  
(REFTEL). MAITRE VERGES' INVOLVEMENT IN A CASE  
ALREADY LOST BY NIGERIEN ATTORNEYS IS PERCEIVED AS A  
POLITICAL PLOY AIMED AT INTIMIDATING THE COURT. IN  
FACT, VERGES' PUBLIC STATEMENTS SUGGEST THAT HIS  
BRIEF DIFFERS LITTLE FROM THE EARLIER MOTIONS  
SUBMITTED BY THE CDS AND REJECTED BY THE COURT. THE  
PRINCIPAL DIFFERENCE APPEARS TO BE VERGES' ARGUMENT  
THAT THE PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION SYSTEM APPLIED  
TO THE OTHER ASSEMBLY SEATS SHOULD ALSO HAVE BEEN  
APPLIED TO THE SPECIAL DISTRICTS. IN THE EIGHT  
SPECIAL DISTRICTS--CREATED TO ENSURE NIGER'S SMALLER  
ETHNIC MINORITIES WOULD BE REPRESENTED--THE SEAT  
GOES TO WHICHEVER CANDIDATE WINS A PLURALITY.

5. COMMENT: PRESIDENT OUSMANE--BY HIS APPARENT  
UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE VERDICT OF THE COURTS ON  
THE LEGALITY OF THE ELECTIONS AND HIS OBSTINANT  
INSISTENCE ON HIS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO REJECT THE  
OPPOSITION MAJORITY'S CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER--  
IS RUNNING REAL POLITICAL RISKS. PRESIDENT  
OUSMANE'S INTENT MAY BE TO PORTRAY HIMSELF AND HIS  
COALITION AS THE DEFENDERS OF THE RULE OF LAW AND  
CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY. BUT NIGERIENS  
INCREASINGLY ARE FRUSTRATED BY THE POLITICAL  
MACHINATIONS AND THE CONSEQUENT LACK OF PROGRESS  
TOWARDS FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT. END COMMENT.  
DAVISON

ADMIN  
END OF MESSAGE

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