

The Center for Strategic and International Studies

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May 7, 1969

Mr. Richard Helms
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Helms,

On May 22, 1969, this Center will conduct a seminar on the Nigeria-Biafra conflict from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Chairman will be Professor L. Gray Cowan, Director of the African Studies Program, Columbia University.

In view of your extensive knowledge and responsibilities, it is our pleasure to invite you to send someone from your agency to attend and participate in this seminar. As mentioned in two telephone conversations between your personal secretary, [redacted] and Mr. John Bernard of our staff, discussion will focus on four broad issues with a different panel of about eight people chosen to begin examination of each issue. Thereafter, the discussion will be opened to the entire group.

In keeping with our usual format here at the Center, we expect participation by a number of public and private figures distinguished for their knowledge of Nigerian and African affairs: members of Congress, administration officials, academicians, diplomats and defense officials, both retired and active, and prominent businessmen and media specialists. Some participants are expected to come from Europe and Africa.

The purpose of the seminar is to provide an off-the-record forum to clarify issues and realities in the Nigerian civil war situation. An attempt will be made to identify present alternatives and future ramifications. It is intended to stimulate a frank exchange of views, to raise policy questions; not to seek a consensus or to make recommendations as a group. As a result of this seminar, the Center will prepare a report which will contain a summary

Mr. Richard Helms

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of the principal viewpoints and ideas expressed by the participants and made available on a selective basis to legislative and executive leaders. We do allow the media specialists who participate to write on the meeting, but not to quote any participants without their explicit permission. There has been no violation of this understanding in the past.

Should other responsibilities preclude an all-day commitment, we would, of course, welcome attendance for such portion of the seminar as possible. An agenda and a list of questions which will be used to guide the discussions will be sent to those who accept our invitation. A tentative list of those invited will also be sent. Our space is limited; but if you know of anyone interested and especially well informed, we will be glad to invite him if there is still room. In any case, a response to Mrs. Connie Critchfield (783-7950) would be very much appreciated. Should you desire more information, don't hesitate to call me at the same number.

I hope someone from your agency will be able to join us.

Sincerely yours,



Michael A. Samuels
Senior Staff Member

MAS:cc

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