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Folder Title:

568042

**THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET**

ID# 568042

PAGE *CO 097*¹

DATE RECEIVED: 08/05/2003

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE VERNON EHLERS

SUBJECT: REQUESTS THE PRESIDENT TO DEPLOY U.S. TROOPS TO LIBERIA

		ACTION		DISPOSITION		
ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C D	COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS	DAVID HOBBS	ORG	2003/08/05			03/09/16
ACTION COMMENTS						
✓ DEPARTMENT OF STATE		RAR	2003/08/05	<i>BE</i>	<i>A</i>	03 08 18 <i>101</i>
ACTION COMMENTS						
NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL	CONDOLEEZZA RICE	RSI	2003/08/05		C	
ACTION COMMENTS						
ACTION COMMENTS:						

COMMENTS:

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENTS 0

MEDIA: FAX

INDIVIDUAL CODES:

REPORT CODE:

USER CODE:

ACTION CODES:

- A - APPROPRIATE ACTION
- C - COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION
- D - DRAFT RESPONSE
- F - FURNISH FACT SHEET
- I - INFO COPY/NO ACT NECESSARY
- R - DIRECT REPLY W/ COPY
- S - FOR SIGNATURE
- X - INTERIM REPLY

DISPOSITION CODES:

- A - ANSWERED
- B - NON-SPEC-REFERRAL
- C - COMPLETED
- S - SUSPENDED

OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

- TYPE RESP = INITIALS OF SIGNER
- CODE = A
- COMPLETED = DATE OF OUTGOING

**SCANNED
BY
ORM**

REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT (ROOM 72, OEOB) EXT-62590 KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT.



AF
United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

www.state.gov

AUG 18 2003

Dear Mr. Ehlers:

The President has asked that the Department of State respond to your letter of July 24 regarding the issue of sending U.S. troops to Liberia.

The situation in Liberia is a major concern to the United States, and we are actively considering how we can best support international efforts to help Liberia return to peace and the rule of law. As President Bush pledged on July 30, " ... [the United States] will... take the necessary steps to get ECOWAS in place so that we can deliver aid and help to suffering Liberians." On August 14, U.S. Marines secured Roberts Field and assisted Nigerian forces in securing the port. We will continue to coordinate with ECOWAS on how to facilitate the deployment of further peacekeeping forces to the country and support the ECOWAS mission. In addition a U.S. military team is in Monrovia to assess how best to address Liberia's humanitarian situation, and the Iwo Jima Marine Expeditionary Unit remains offshore.

Our immediate priorities in Liberia are to achieve peace, stop the bloodshed, and address humanitarian concerns. To accomplish this, as the President has said, Mr. Taylor had to leave Liberia. He has now done so. We hope this now allows us, in coordination with the ECOWAS forces, to put in place the security and political situation in the country to start relief efforts and begin to rebuild Liberia.

Much remains to be done in order to achieve our longer-term goals. All combatants must be disarmed, demobilized, and reintegrated into society, and the security services must be restructured and retrained. Liberia's economy and infrastructure must be rebuilt, the government must be made transparent, and the environment

The Honorable
Vernon J. Ehlers,
House of Representatives.

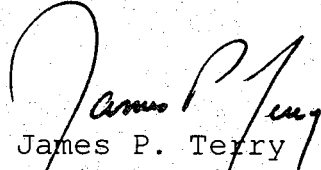
H 2003 0811-005

protected. Refugees and other displaced persons must go home to a reasonably secure environment with access to basic nutrition, sanitation, health care, and education. Timely, free and fair elections must take place and the Liberians must undergo a national reconciliation process.

Thank you for your continued interest in Liberia and West Africa.

I hope this information is useful. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



James P. Terry
Acting Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs



568042

KC: File Under Member

FYI: CC
Brooke

Congress of the United States of America
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Herron J. Ehlers

Michigan

July 24, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for recently hosting the White House dinner in recognition of the 90th birthday of former President Gerald R. Ford. It was my great honor and pleasure to attend this dinner. While at the dinner, I spoke with you regarding the situation in Liberia. I am writing to reemphasize my thoughts on Liberia.

I respectfully, but strongly, request that you immediately deploy U.S. troops to Liberia. These troops will act as a peacekeeping force, and should work in conjunction with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to enforce a ceasefire and disarmament. The peacekeeping force should not only ensure the security of the U.S. embassy and U.S. citizens in Liberia, but also should develop a clear strategy for rebuilding peace and a stable government in Liberia.

This position is not just based on my opinion, but on advice from constituents. For decades, the Christian Reformed Church of North America, which is headquartered in my district, has provided humanitarian assistance and missions outreach in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Some of my constituents who have served in those countries have contacted me. They thoroughly understand the situation in Liberia, and they strongly believe that rapid deployment of U.S. troops to Liberia is the best course of action.

In the past, you have made any deployment of U.S. troops conditional on the departure of President Charles Taylor. I strongly support removing him from power, but believe we must take actions to ensure this happens. The atrocities in Liberia have worsened and the time for inaction has passed. When Sierra Leone faced similar political unrest in the early 1990s, the U.S. and Great Britain waited too long to intervene. This reluctance resulted in serious human rights violations including forced rapes, the severance of human limbs, and thousands of unnecessary deaths. Without immediate intervention, I am fearful that the conditions in Liberia will continue to deteriorate resulting in a major humanitarian crisis.

RECEIVED
2003 AUG -9 AM 11:11
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

RECEIVED BY
JUL 24 2003
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President George W. Bush
July 24, 2003
Page 2

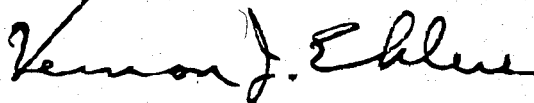
An international coalition is supportive of U.S. involvement in Liberia. ECOWAS requested that the U.S. deploy peacekeeping forces. In addition, the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan, recently urged the U.S. to send troops before it is too late.

Your trip to Africa generated much good will and hope for a strong relationship between the U.S. and Africa. I am concerned that you will lose the goodwill generated on that trip if you do not act soon to deploy U.S. troops.

Again, I respectfully request that you immediately send U.S. troops to Liberia. A major humanitarian crisis is looming and the time has come for the U.S. to act.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,



Vernon J. Ehlers
Member of Congress

VJE:tp

Cc: The Honorable Colin Powell, Secretary of State
The Honorable Condoleezza Rice, National Security Advisor

**THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE
REFERRAL**

August 05, 2003



TO: DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ACTION REQUESTED: DIRECT REPLY W/COPY

REMARKS: PLEASE RESPOND BY AUG 18 03

DESCRIPTION OF INCOMING:

ID: 568042
MEDIA: FAX, DATED JUL 24, 2003
TO: PRESIDENT BUSH
FROM: THE HONORABLE VERNON EHLERS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
SUBJECT: REQUESTS THE PRESIDENT TO DEPLOY U.S. TROOPS TO LIBERIA

PROMPT ACTION IS ESSENTIAL -- IF REQUIRED ACTION HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN WITHIN 9 WORKING DAYS OF RECEIPT, PLEASE TELEPHONE THE UNDERSIGNED AT 456-2590.

**RETURN CORRESPONDENCE, WORKSHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE (OR DRAFT) TO:
RECORDS MANAGEMENT, ROOM 72, THE WHITE HOUSE, 20500**

OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT - THE WHITE HOUSE

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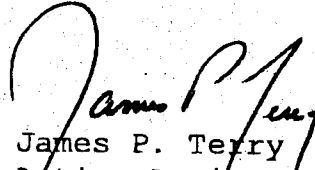
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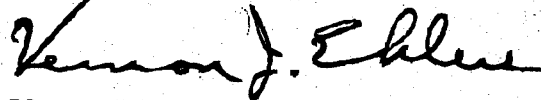
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