



The American School of Kinshasa

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Washington, D.C.
20521-2220

February 10, 1993

The Honorable Melissa Wells
United States Ambassador to Zaire
American Embassy
Kinshasa

Dear Ms. Ambassador:

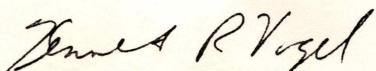
I am writing this letter to thank you and your administrative officer, Larry Blackburn, for the outstanding work that you have been doing for the United States citizens in Zaire. I know that your responsibility is awesome and that your decisions have been very difficult. I also know that you have kept foremost in your mind the safety and security of the American citizens in this country.

I was especially impressed with your and Larry's frequent visits to TASOK to keep the American community informed. I have worked at several posts in Africa and under very trying circumstances, but I have never seen an ambassador or JAO take such a personal interest in communicating with "unofficial" Americans or go to such trouble to organize housing, transport, food and recreational amenities to ease their suffering.

I would also like to state that my wife and I agree with your assessment of the situation here in Zaire, and we support your decisions to prod Americans to leave the country. We understand that the continued existence of the school in this part of town is only a stimulus for Americans to avoid making the hard decisions that responsible parenthood would dictate. As for ourselves, we realize now that we should have heeded the warnings of the State Department in the U.S. and not ventured into this part of the world at this time.

In closing, allow me to reiterate my deepest gratitude and admiration for your efforts. I am only sorry that our presence here has added to your burdens, rather than easing them.

Sincerely,


Kenneth R. Vogel, Ph.D.
Secondary Principal/Counselor