

G. Baccus Matthews' 1979 Letter of Appeal to Pres. Tolbert

Dear Mr. President:

I appreciate the fact that the authorities permitted me to write you this letter.

Sir, permit me to express regrets on behalf of myself and my collaborators and to note the dilemma which we, young people face. Your thoughts and actions, Sir, based upon experience of things as they have been, as they are and, therefore, as they can possibly be. We, unfortunately, know only the present; we are the new generation – but being young people, our minds are fertile for visions. We want things as we think they ought to be, but we lack the experience of the process by which they have reached this far. This is our problem. Yes, the costly lesson we have learned tells us that we are going nowhere for nothing unless we can rely on the experience and wisdom of men such as you.

After much reflection, I have become convinced that those of us who were so confident about our methods now have every reason to thoroughly re-examine them. We invite you to help us develop a true perspective of the forces we ought to work for and not against. You would be making a lasting contribution to the future of our country. If we, young people, mean much to you then, Sir, the challenge is yours.

On behalf of all of us, I appeal for your fatherly consideration to permit us to utilise our energies in helping to carry out a meaningful programme of national reconstruction, to heal the wounds, under your direct supervision.

I plead that you constitute all of us into a Special Committee for National Reconstruction. Its duties may include, as you see fit, the awakening of public spirit for the OAU Conference; promoting a nationwide “All Liberians Are One” campaign; reassuring business houses that the events of April 14 are behind us and will not be repeated; and with the assurance of our associates abroad, a well-ordered public relations campaign to raise our country’s image abroad.

We would commit our energies to this, Sir, if you would guide our work whereby we can learn something from you.

It would be fine, Mr. President, if the world could see that unity of purpose persists among the Liberian people and we remain as one nation, under God, indivisible.

We appeal to you for this unique act of statesmanship. There are reasons why you are President and, as I told you once, you are far from being just another African Head of State. As my father used to say, “God made some people, but created others”.

In the cause of the people.

Respectfully,

G. Baccus Matthews

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