



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
US ARMY WAR COLLEGE
CARLISLE BARRACKS PENNSYLVANIA 17013

APPLIC TO
ATTENTION OF

Office of the Commandant

Lieutenant General A. Akinrinade
Chief of Defense Staff
Ministry of Defense
Lagos
Nigeria

Dear General Akinrinade:

Once again it is my distinct pleasure to comment on the performance of a Nigerian Army Officer and also to report to you that Brigadier Muhammad Buhari proved to be a most distinguished International Fellow. He graduated with the Class of 1980 on 9 June and while we do not have class standings it should be pointed out that his performance was outstanding in every respect.

So that you may better understand the environment in which he worked and studied, let me briefly describe our academic program. The ten-month course, designed to prepare students for senior command and staff positions and to promote an understanding of the art and science of land warfare, is divided into the Common Overview and Advanced Courses. The former phase is the basic academic effort undertaken by all US Army War College students and serves as the basis for more specialized efforts during subsequent phases of the curriculum. During the Common Overview, the student examines the elements of national power in relation to specific issues which directly affect national security; studies defense management and decisionmaking to include the leadership and management of operational activities and the human dimension of command; and, considers the military strategies of the great powers, command of large units, and military planning and operations in key global regions. The advanced courses provide for study in greater depth on a wide variety of subjects to meet the individual professional needs of our students. During this phase, Brigadier Buhari concentrated on those subjects and areas that could contribute the most to his professional development. He took four courses for credit--"African Realities and Prospects," "Middle East Political Dynamics," "Problems of Modernization" and "Comparative Communism" and audited three other courses--"Defense Decisionmaking," "Analytical Techniques of Management" and "Fundamentals of Automatic Data Processing." In addition, he arranged on his own to visit US Army facilities where he could further his professional understanding of logistics management.

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Brigadier Buhari is a man of extraordinary aptitude who demonstrated a broad knowledge of current international problems. His keen interest, sense of responsibility and solid grasp of the strategic implications of the important global issues marked him as a key member of any student seminar. In fact, he was at his best in the "give and take" environment of our seminar group discussions where students are encouraged to express their views even though they differ from the group consensus.

A well read, articulate professional who demonstrated a vast range of knowledge in strategically related issues, Muhammadu was an active and contributing member of his seminar group. He could be counted on to weed through the peripheral issues and irrelevant discussions to identify the source of dissension or misunderstanding, and make appropriate proposals or recommendations to keep the discussion properly focused. His views and opinions were often sought, consistently on target, and highly respected by his contemporaries. He has an outstanding ability to isolate the key issues and facts and, where appropriate, propose recommendations which kept the discussion focused on the central topic.

Brigadier Buhari's thorough understanding of the major issues in the United States and the world reflected obvious research and analytical facilities far exceeding the majority of his contemporaries. His written efforts were "first-rate" and noted for their outstanding quality of research, logic and communications skills. Brigadier Buhari's oral presentations consistently reflected those gifts of mind and bearing which are essential in command or group endeavors. His individual presentations were of exceptional value in that he avoided vague generalities and focused on the issues which involved hard, detailed choices.

Throughout the course, Brigadier Buhari displayed a thorough understanding of the substantive issues at stake, together with a remarkable ability to deal with a wide range of complex issues simultaneously. He is a broadly-oriented officer who doesn't channel his energies into narrow areas but rather seeks to improve his overall understanding of international issues. Muhammadu is intellectually curious, cooperative and does not hesitate to state his own views. He is also a good listener and always took account of what others had to say. Muhammadu's ability to ask relevant and probing questions, his political sensitivity and intimate knowledge of current political-military problems made him one of the key motivators in his seminar group.

Brigadier Buhari demonstrated an exceptional understanding of the complexities of military strategy and the process whereby forces to support a particular strategy are developed. He is a most perceptive, intelligent individual who contributed a great deal to the seminar based upon his experiences in the Nigerian Army. Muhammadu was consistently able to provide the seminar group with a non-Western perspective and a surprisingly broad strategic view of the world. He was able, on many occasions, to effectively contrast his own Army's command and management philosophies and practices with the United States Army's in such a way as to be beneficial and educational to all.

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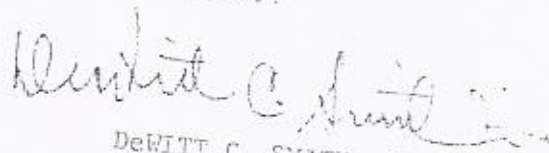
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Muhammadu is a most personable and engaging officer who earned the unqualified admiration and respect of his colleagues. His sociability and high ethical standards set him apart and when coupled with his other personal attributes mark Brigadier Buhari as an individual who will continue to be a significant contributor in his chosen profession. Muhammadu is a natural leader with an abundance of intelligence and broad experience and he demonstrated a rare capacity for continued development and growth. More so than other officers in his position, he continually strove to improve his knowledge of his profession and to develop those skills required to contribute to the Nigerian Army in the future.

Brigadier Buhari was an active participant in the extra-curricular activities of the student body. In addition to his activities with his seminar in sports competition, he volunteered to be an assistant coach of a junior-level soccer team. He generously supported our community relations program by speaking on several occasions to groups in the local area. Muhammadu, his lovely wife Safinatu, and his young family were actively involved in the social life of the College and were a credit to Nigeria.

In sum, Brigadier Buhari's wisdom and incisive and analytical mind identify him as being capable of discharging increasing degrees of responsibility in an outstanding manner. His insights into rather complex issues and ability to tackle the problems at hand indicate that he has exceptional potential in the armed forces of Nigeria and is worthy of the trust placed in him by your government.

Sincerely,



DEWITT C. SMITH, JR.
Major General, USA
Commandant