

'VIVE MME. NIXON!' ECHOES IN ABIDJAN

Ivory Coast Greet Her on
Last Stop of African Tour

By WILLIAM BORDERS
Special to The New York Times

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast, Jan. 7—This steamy West African country gave Mrs. Richard M. Nixon a rousing welcome today.

Despite intermittent rain, she was greeted by perhaps 75,000 people—men wearing feathers and fiercely painted tribal masks, women shaking gourds that rattled, neat rows of uniformed schoolchildren waving and giggling and even a few of the Frenchmen who dominate much of the life here.

"Wasn't that great!" she exclaimed after the drive in from the airport along an eight-mile route lined with well-wishers dancing, clapping, cheering and chanting: "Vive Mme. Nixon!"

Mrs. Nixon, who was in a black Rolls-Royce with President and Mrs. Félix Houphouët-Boigny, twice had the top folded back so that she could ride standing up and waving, and the crowds loved it.

The Government had encouraged the turnout, and many of the people along the route of the 40-car motorcade, including children on special holiday, had apparently been brought in buses.

Mrs. Nixon's reception was significant in an African context because this affluent former colony has traditionally looked toward France, which still exerts an enormous influence here.

Shows Mood of Paris

Abidjan, the glossy and graceful capital, exhibits the mood of Paris in its good restaurants and the sense of elegant chic with which its women dress. It now has several times the number of French residents that it had at the time of independence 11 years ago.

President Houphouët Boigny has encouraged the French to come and invest freely, as a result this is one of the most modern and booming of African countries, and the French are everywhere in evidence.

But according to an editorial today in the Government-controlled newspaper, *Fraternité-Martin*, the reception of Mrs. Nixon is a move by President Houphouët-Boigny "to widen the circle of friends of the Ivory Coast."

She came here after visits to Liberia and Ghana, on a one-week goodwill tour that will end Sunday, when she returns to Washington. Most of her schedule is handshaking, and the people whose hands she is shaking are clearly delighted.

Yesterday in Aburi, a hill station just north of Accra, Mrs. Nixon drew whoops of appreciation when she joined half a dozen Ghanaian women in dancing a swaying shuffle to the beat of bare-chested drummers with beads around their necks.



Associated Press

GOODWILL: Mrs. Richard M. Nixon at home economics class in Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Hands Out Teddy Bears

She also visited a vocational school, where she told the girls in a sewing class that she brought "greetings from the young people of the United States" and a hospital for undernourished children, where she distributed teddy bears she had brought with her on the White House jet.

In a similar tour this afternoon in Abidjan, Mrs. Nixon visited home-economics classes and a nursery school where she distributed candy, hugged several children and at one point got down on one knee to admire a tiny boy's watercolor.

She was accompanied by Mrs. Houphouët-Boigny, as in Ghana she had been accompanied most of the time by Mrs. Kofi A. Busia, the wife of the Prime Minister.

On the visit to Liberia, where Mrs. Nixon headed the American delegation to the inauguration of President William R. Tolbert Jr., she had been treated more like a head of state, spending a lot of time in his company.

This afternoon she had a talk with President Houphouët-Boigny. Like brief conferences with President Tolbert and Prime Minister Busia, this 55-minute conversation, held through an interpreter, was thought to have covered changes in American foreign aid policy and President Nixon's forthcoming trips to the Soviet Union and China.