

# Nigeria Reconciliation Affirmed by U Thant

United Nations, N.Y. — (RNS) — Following a 22-hour visit to Lagos, Secretary General U Thant departed for Paris, saying he was "convinced" that "the process of national reconciliation has started auspiciously" in Nigeria.

U Thant reportedly declined an offer by the Nigerian government to fly him into the "Biafran" areas for a first-hand look at the situation. Instead, the secretary general consulted with Dr. Henrik Beer, secretary general of the International Red Cross, who had just returned from a tour of unspecified areas in the former battle zone.

Referring to this meeting, U Thant said that Dr. Beer had reported that "there is no hint of the slightest evidence of violence or ill treatment of the civilian population in the area by federal troops."

The secretary general arrived in Lagos on Jan. 18 at the invitation of General Yakubu Gowon, the chief of state who told U Thant at the airport: "I have found you to be a true friend and wise counselor. Your vision of world order based on peace and justice and your unimpeachable integrity enabled you to resist pressures from powerful interests that threatened to destroy Nigeria."

"It is in a mood of somber reflection that I salute you — a dedicated man of peace," Gen. Gowon added. "I repeat here in your presence my government's firm guarantees of general amnesty for all our compatriots. We guarantee the safety and security of all," Gen. Gowon said.

In responding, U Thant reiterated his views on the U.N. attitude towards the "civil conflict" and the member states, and spoke of the need for national reconciliation.

U Thant again touched on this theme at the Lagos airport before leaving for Paris. "Outside assistance can only be given to Nigeria with the consent and agreement of the federal government," he said. "The cooperation of the government is essential for the flow of outside assistance into Nigeria."

Before flying to Lagos, U Thant spent two days in Abidjan, the Ivory Coast, one of the four African countries which had recognized the secessionist Biafra and supported the rebels.



Father Fintan Kilbride, an Irish missionary priest just returned from Biafra, holds a cannon shell which he says was fired at Biafran civilians from a Russian-built MIG jet flown by a federal Nigerian pilot. Addressing a press conference in New York, Father Kilbride made an urgent two-point plea for "international observers" to prevent possible atrocities and for a "direct relief airlift to stricken areas." (RNS)

He said that "on the basic issue of national reconciliation there was no difference" between him and the Ivory Coast president. He said he had the impression that West European leaders had a different assessment from most of the African leaders he had met on the 11-country West African trip.

He stated that the Europeans expressed "great concern" over the future of the Ibo, while the Africans had "confidence" in the assurances of the Nigerian government regarding the protection of all the peoples, including the Ibos.

At another ecumenical service Sunday night, in Messiah Lutheran Church, Mt. Read Boulevard and English Road in Greece, a priest and a minister conducted a "multi-media presentation" of pictures, recordings, prayers and music.

## Hunger Still Threatens

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ing a stagnant nation — the Ibos are needed.

There is probably no reason to doubt Nigerian leader Gen. Yakubu Gowon when he says the nation does not want to kill Ibos in masses; Nigeria needs the Ibos. But Ibos, who remember the Nigerian jets that strafed markets and refugee-jammed highways and who remember the terrible slaughters in Kano in the North in 1966, must be convinced that Gowon is telling the truth.

Gowon must quickly settle some prickly political problems. Three days before Biafran secession, Nigeria scrapped the political structure that it inherited from the British — three federated regions: North, West, and East — and established 12 states.

The North was divided into six states, the West into three, and the East into three. The new structure was intended to give effective voice to the many minority tribes that make up half the nation's population. It was also intended to cut off secessionist feeling in the North and West.

But it has never had a chance to work. The East did secede, and war broke out. The implementation of the 12-state scheme was largely suspended.

Now the important issue of Ibo participation must be settled — and the real work of governing Nigeria under a new structure must begin.

Nigeria's international political relations are in poor shape. It has blacklisted France at a time when France appears to be overthrowing the Gaullist policies that so angered Nigeria. It has blacklisted Portugal — probably no great loss.

It has placed on its unwanted list Rhodesia and South Africa at a time when some black African nations are finding ways of using what they have to offer without compromising their principles.

It has drawn closer to the Soviet Union and Britain — the old colonial ruler — out of necessity and now must find a way of reasserting its independence from these countries.

## World Missions Director Brings Thanks to U.S.

Detroit — (NC) — The top director of the Church's worldwide mission organization has come to the United States to say thanks to American Catholics for their unmatched generosity.

Affable, 59-year-old Archbishop Sergio Pignedoli, international president of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, calculated that in the last 20 years U.S. Catholics have given more than \$236 million to the society.

At a meeting with John Cardinal Dearden of Detroit, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and of the United States Catholic Conference, Archbishop Pignedoli explained his visit to this country in these words:

"It is to express the profound thanks of the Holy Father, as well as the gratitude of the Church in those areas of the world where it cannot support itself, for the wonderful generosity of United States Catholics to the whole mission effort of the Church."

The United States ranks No. 1 among the 52 nations which are major contributors to the society, the archbishop said. The 1969 contributions, he added, have not been totaled, but in 1968 U.S. contributions amounted to \$17 million.

Second largest contributor, Archbishop Pignedoli said, is West Germany, followed by Italy, France, Spain, Canada, Belgium, Holland and Australia.

# 15 Churches Plan Joint Projects

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"Educate, train and involve members . . . to promote the joint ecumenical mission of the churches . . ."

"Encourage fellowship, mutual understanding and respect . . . among the members of the churches."

Catholic churches associated with NEM include Sacred Heart Cathedral, Holy Rosary, Holy Apostles, St. Patrick's and St. Anthony's. Charles Settlement House also is affiliated.

In this Sunday's services at the Cathedral Father Hayes will speak the "Words of Welcome," the Rev. Mr. Taylor the "Words of Explanation" and Bishop Hogan's sermon will be titled the "Words of Expectation."

Explaining the covenant-signing in the Cathedral, Father Hayes said: "This is our expression of cooperative harmony in the Unity Octave week. These churches are showing more and more common interest in the welfare of their neighborhoods. Our concern with such community issues as traffic, cleanliness, youth affairs, and happiness of the elderly will become more organized and effective."

The Northwest Ministry will also conduct a weekend "Lay Academy" several times in February and March at the Dewey Ave. Presbyterian Church to provide "mission training" for the leadership of the area projects.

A combined choir made up of singers from most of the churches in the Northwest Ministry will sing. A reception in the Cathedral Rectory Hall following the NEM celebration will feature booths displaying the ecumenical work being accomplished and projected in the sector.

The Christian Unity week also will be climaxed in the Gates-Chili area at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25, with an ecumenical service in St. Jude's Church, 4100 Lyell Road, Gates. The Rev. Don Vickers of Gates Presbyterian Church will preach.

It will be the third such service sponsored by the Gates-Chili Interfaith Clergymen's Group. Father John Steger, pastor of St. Jude's, preached Sunday night, Jan. 18, in Gates Presbyterian Church, and Father Edward Steinkircher, pastor of Holy Ghost Church, was scheduled to preach Jan. 22 in Community Christian Church, 2649 Chili Ave.

At another ecumenical service Sunday night, in Messiah Lutheran Church, Mt. Read Boulevard and English Road in Greece, a priest and a minister conducted a "multi-media presentation" of pictures, recordings, prayers and music.

Leading the program were Father Bernard Falcone, OFM, Cap. of St. Bernard's Seminary faculty, and the Rev. W. J. Simons, minister to migrant workers in Wayne County.

## Teacher Strike Averted in NY

New York — (NC) — A strike by lay teachers in 305 schools in the New York archdiocese has been averted after marathon negotiation sessions.

The teachers, by a vote of 335 to 255, accepted a two-year contract after a week of intense bargaining sessions conducted by the state mediation board. The accord was reached finally after a 29-hour negotiation meeting.

Although discussions had narrowed to tenure and grievance procedure, the major factor all along the line was money. The new contract includes an immediate \$800 increase for elementary school teachers with a bachelor's degree and a starting salary of \$6,600 going to a top of \$9,600 after 13 years experience.

## Vatican Studies Sex Ed Issue

Vatican City — (RNS) — The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education announced it is giving "priority" to the study of the problem of "how to teach sex in the schools."

Sex education is being given priority, the announcement said, in response to the Second Vatican Council request that young people be given "a positive and prudent sex education as they grow older."

Further, the declaration said, it is impossible to ignore a question that is on "the agenda in numerous countries," and about which "there are many uncertainties in educational circles."

Accordingly, the question is being studied "in a preliminary phase," and will be pursued through normal procedures.

The head of the congregation section dealing with Catholic schools below the college level is Dr. Alfred Kessler, a Swiss Marianist brother. In an interview published in the Jan. 8 issue of The Long Island Catholic, Dr. Kessler said the congregation was studying the over-all pattern of sex education in Catholic secondary schools throughout the world.

He emphasized that such education should be on an individual level based on the ability and emotional maturity of each pupil to comprehend the instruction in the proper light.

The most desirable situation, he said in the interview, is one in which "a combination of parents and teachers work together to give the students the biological facts only after a solid theological and moral foundation had been provided."

## PRINCE BISHOP DIES

Munich — (RNS) — The last Prince-Bishop of Austria, Bishop Adam Hefter of Gurk, died at Otterkring, a small Bavarian village near Prien. He was 98 years old.



The Cenacle House on East Avenue.

# Cenacle Plans Fund Campaign

The Cenacle House of Rochester will mark the inaugural of their fund raising campaign with a tea at the Cenacle Sunday, Jan. 25.

Among the distinguished guests will be Bishop Joseph Hogan, Honorary Chairman of the campaign, Sister Mary Hanley, provincial of the order, and Mayor Stephen May.

Edward G. Moran, assistant to the president of Control Data Corp. and chairman of the campaign, announced the tea as being the first event in the drive which is planned to give the Cenacle an extended financial solvency and to bring to the attention of the people of Rochester, the services the Cenacle offers.

The Cenacle House is no longer used exclusively as a retreat house for women, but has embarked on an

Open Door Policy to serve all the people of the community.

The House has recently been used by ministers of all religions for a film workshop on religious education and for a retreat for Presbyterian youths conducted by Rev. William Showalter.

The House is currently being used for the weekly meetings of the local

chapter of the Alcoholics Anonymous Group for women.

The fund raising campaign, the first ever for the Sisters of the Cenacle in the Rochester area, will allow for this repair work, allow for more salaried personnel, pay off previously accrued debts and completely finance the activities of the house for a minimum of five years.

## Et Tu, Zirkel

Brooklyn, N.Y. — (NC) — A story in the Tablet, Brooklyn diocese newspaper, starts out like this:

"Praesidens Catholicae Classialis Societatis Majoris Neo-Eboracae rogavit Episcopum Mugarero ut Cardinalis Heenan consilium iniret quod patitur ecclesias in Diocese Westminster

offerre parochianis Missam Latinam singulis Diebus Dominicis."

It's a story about a request for permission to have a Mass in Latin every Sunday.

Editor Don Zirkel said he hoped those who understand Latin will be pleased by the story.

**McCurdy's**

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In a definite "first", a nun archdiocese. Sister Mary C. Brietenbeck, now bishop in priest. Meanwhile, in Lor named the Church of Engl She will be the principal la vising the bishop on

# U.S. Bishop Wider Ecumenical

Washington, D.C. — (RNS) — U.S. Catholic bishops pledged to themselves to "intensify" their efforts in the ecumenical movement and to the nation's Catholics to join Christians in the holy task of storing the unity of followers of Lord.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued the call in the 1970 observance of the Year of Prayer for Christian Unity, 1968 to 1975, which is being celebrated throughout the world.

The NCCB declared that the Holy See's declaration of the Second Vatican Council indicated major routes on the path to unity. They are:

• "Through the work of dialogue whereby everyone gains the knowledge and a more just application of the religious life of the different Christian communities.

• "Through cooperation between Christians in the duties demanded by the Christian conscience for the common good of humanity.

• "Through prayer in com