

Confusion, Fear Haunt War-Torn Nigeria

While many church and private groups throughout the world continue to urge more aid for war-ravaged Biafra and other areas of Nigeria, uncertainty, confusion and often outright fear complicate the situation.

Nigerian leaders, including Maj. Gen. Yakubu Gowon, head of state, have declared that relief efforts in the former secessionist Eastern region are being competently handled by the local Red Cross and others already on the scene. Conflicting reports nevertheless continue to flow from apparently reliable sources.

In addition, controversy obscures the fate of 32 Christian missionaries accused of "aiding the Ibo peoples," the predominant tribe in largely Christian Biafra. Northern Nigeria is pre-

dominantly Moslem.

The Ibo people, weary of war and weak from years of starvation, seem undecided as to whether they desire reconciliation with federal Nigeria or wish to maintain their "search for freedom" via guerrilla warfare or exile.

With the arrival of American and British plane loads of supplies, relief efforts are said to be looking up.

Yet village after village is without sufficient food and hospitals are without necessary medicines.

The federal Nigerian government has refused to use the UH air strip for relief flights, because, as Biafra's link with the outside world, UH came to symbolize all that the federal forces opposed. UH was also

the base for a contingent of Holy Ghost Catholic priests and Protestant missionaries who distributed supplies flown in by Joint Church Aid groups from Europe and the United States.

These missionaries, along with several Irish nuns and lay volunteers staffing hospitals in the Biafran regions, have been threatened with exile by federal authorities.

More than two weeks after relief efforts began, a United Nations observer, Said Udin Khan, reported to Secretary U Thant that the program was insufficient. He predicted that starvation and its related problems "will remain a cause of alarm for many months." The report sharply contradicted earlier statements by observers sent by the International Red Cross and other agencies.

Mr. Khan, a Pakistani, who said he covered the heart of Biafra, including Uli, Owerri and Orlu and all other major towns, also reported cases of "molestation of women" and "looting" by Nigerian troops occupying Biafra.

The federal government's relations with the foreign press have at times been less than cordial and cooperative. Many newsmen have been officially detained or forcibly confined, especially since the publication of unfavorable news reports.

Pope Paul early expressed fear that "the victory of arms may carry with it the killing of innumerable people." He added that "there are those who actually fear genocide."

The statement set off a violent reaction in Lagos, Ni-

geria's capital. Students gathered to celebrate victory, demonstrated against the pontiff, Nigeria's ambassador to the Vatican registered an official complaint, and Gen. Gowon condemned the Pope's statement, assuring the Ibo's of their safety and adding "we have never considered them our enemies."

Earlier, however, the Nigerian leader vigorously rejected any help from church-related agencies, such as Joint Church Aid, Caritas International and all those who had given assistance to the rebels.

Joint Church Aid's European arm, headquartered in Geneva, announced the end of its operations in Nigeria. The grouping of 33 Protestant and Catholic service agencies in 21 countries was outlawed by the

federal government, which took the position that the war would have ended sooner without JCA assistance.

Relief efforts to Nigeria since the official end of the war Jan. 12 have been spotty and confusing.

Initially, Nigeria refused all outside assistance. Then as complaints from observers mounted, prohibitions against British assistance and certain church-related agencies were relaxed. Most recently, U.S. aid standing by for over three weeks, was finally accepted.

Scores of U.S. Protestant bodies recently responded to a call by the World Council of Churches by urging their members to approve a proportionate share of a \$500,000 contribution asked of U.S. Catholic Relief Services, over-

seas relief arm of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, announced it was answering a request from Nigeria by sending \$2 million in clothing and blood plasma.

Bishop Edward E. Swanson, CRS director, said that reports from Biafra indicate there will be a tremendous need over a long period of time and it may take as long as 10 years to regain normalcy in the eastern region. The prelate said he had information that at least 80 of the 105 Christian missionaries in the secessionist territory would be permitted to stay.

Food and work, the setting out of new crops, are the immediate needs in Biafra — but eventually the question of reconciliation and peace between the federal government and its Biafran insurgents must be faced.

New Role For IHM Community

By GERARD SHERRY (NC News Service)

Los Angeles—The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary announced Feb. 2 that they were forming a lay community open to both married and single persons "committed to a service of man in the spirit of the Gospels."

Nucleus of the new community will be approximately 10; Immaculate Heart Sisters have asked to be dispensed from their canonical vows from the prescriptions of the Vatican's Congregation of Rites.

Anita Caspary, president of the former order of Sisters, said she will continue as head of the new lay group, which will be based in Los Angeles.

"We are taking this step," Sister Anita said, "in order that we might fully develop the permanent in contemporary community life which we attended to set in motion two years ago. Our repeated efforts to expand the structure of canon law and the congregation of the approval of the Sacred Congregation."

She was referring to documents of renewal, issued by the Immaculate Heart Sisters in October, 1967, and sent to James Francis Cardinal McIntyre, then a bishop of Los Angeles, an overwhelming approval of the community of 560 nuns.

The recommended changes included simplification of names, and a greater emphasis on areas of endeavor beyond education and care of the sick. Both Cardinal McIntyre and the Congregation of Rites opposed some of the permutations. In the ensuing controversy, the IHM Sisters were withdrawn from the Los Angeles diocesan school system, with the exception of a group that objected to the changes of renewal.

This latter group was accepted by the cardinal and, in October, 1969, it was announced that it had been given canonical status with the same title then held by the main order.

"The community expects to continue its long-term commitments to education, health care, social concerns and fine arts. Members of the community will continue to Immaculate Heart College, Immaculate Heart High School and the Valley Hosiery and Montecito Conference Center."

Theologian

Paris — (RNS) — French progressive theologian assaulted on Jan. 25 by a gang of "fanatical (Catholic) integrists" outside a Paris church, said here he is lucky to escape with "ripped clothing and bruises."

Father Marc Oraison, a Parisian before he entered the Catholic priesthood, was manhandled and sprayed in the face with harmful gas during a 45-minute mugging outside the Church of Notre Dame de l'Assomption.

According to witnesses, about 150 young demons seemed to be systematically organized under the direction of a few older sons. They gathered in front of the church to prevent Father Oraison from delivering a sermon on "Sexual Morality and Sin." When the priest arrived and attempted to enter the church, the disturbance erupted.

In a letter to the *J. Daily, Le Monde*, Father Oraison said the incident "much more serious than thought at the time."

The theologian professed to see in the episode "a significant phenomenon" transcending the personal. "I was only the excuse," he said, "the point of impact of a significant phenomenon which easily surpasses personal case."

Recalling that another "aggressive" priest, Father Laurentin, was maltreated in a Paris church a few days ago, Father Oraison declared that such assaults had all earmarks of being "very systematically organized" on these priests who are trying "to live with the Church of the Second Vatican Council and the Synod of Bishops."

What amazed him, he said, was that this "factual crystallization" was organized with "truly defensive mission" of "defensive Christianity" against Paul, against the Archbishop of Paris, Francis Cardinal Laurentin, against the "heretical" bishops, and "the theologians and Christians who sought the most authentic evidence of the Gospel."

Lay members of the parish and priests of the Parish of Notre Dame de

LAYMAN NAMED DIOCESAN PREREA

Alexandria, La. — Bishop Charles P. Grecco has named a layman to the diocese's mission bureau and publications.

Father Groppi: A Religious Traditionalist?



Milwaukee — (RNS) — One of the American Catholic Church's foremost dissenters, Father James E. Groppi, whose civil rights militancy has brought him jail sentences and antagonism, is a conservative at heart — a religious traditionalist in the purest sense.

From Father Groppi himself and the men who know him best comes confirmation of that assertion, according to Frank A. Aukofer, Milwaukee Journal staffer who interviewed the controversial priest.

People who know him, the writer said, claim that Father Groppi is a deeply Christian man who more consistently follows the teachings of Christianity and Catholicism than most people who profess them.

From the social standpoint, Father Groppi has to be considered a militant radical, but in theological and religious sense he is a conservative.

"I think he's completely orthodox as far as the Church is concerned," said Msgr. William H. Schult, rector of St. Francis Seminary, which trains priests for the Milwaukee archdiocese. "He's certainly a traditional priest in the old sense."

His spiritual adviser, Father Matthew Gottschalk, pastor of St. Francis Parish, claims that Father Groppi has always expressed a great love for the Church and is basically defensive of it.

Father Groppi himself admitted that "there's no question about it" when asked if he loves the Church. But, he quickly noted, "I am critical of it because I think it's got a pretty big responsibility in imitating Jesus Christ and bringing His message to the world."

According to the writer, Father Groppi said he believed his sensitivity for justice and the poor had been given to him by the Catholic

Church. "If it had done nothing for me the message of the Gospel, I would be eternally grateful," he added.

"He holds very close to the Eucharist and Scriptures," said Father Patrick Flood, director of the Council on Urban Life in Milwaukee. "He reads Scriptures every day. The Eucharist to him, means that the expression of the Mass — in the consecration — embodies Christ and Christ's identity with all mankind, and mankind's identity and unity in Christ, which is still presently held by Catholics and is his motivating force."

Among those who know him as a "deeply Christian man," said Mr. Aukofer, is Michael Cullen, director of Casa Maria Hospitality House, who said Father Groppi is looked upon as "an extraordinary man because... he's an ordinary man doing what is obviously right... He's a very religious man in a traditional sense."

Father Flood sees Father Groppi as the logical conclusion of a conservative theology which is valid today because it is honest and logical for a person to criticize society's institutions, including the Church.

Father Groppi's traditional approach to Catholicism "throws both conservatives and radicals for a loop," according to Father Dismas Becker, a member of the Council on Urban Life. He noted that it bothered conservatives to have something in common with the priest and radicals were surprised by his traditional thinking.

Father Groppi, who seldom misses saying the daily prayers of the priestly office, said, "I don't miss very often, not because I believe I'm bound by pain of sin, but because I enjoy it. I love it." He also prays the Rosary daily, a practice reportedly abandoned by many Catholics.

Archbishop Ramsey will visit New York, March 6-14, to give three lectures on the future of the Christian Church to about 80 bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church at a seminar at New York's Trinity Institute.

He will also attend a reception to be given by Terence Cardinal Cooke of New York.

Thurmond Joins Drive For Public School Prayer

Washington — (NC) — Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina says "while demanding that the states remain neutral with respect to religion in public schools the Supreme Court is itself establishing the religion of secularism."

He has joined a new nationwide campaign to return voluntary prayer to public schools — this time as a living memorial to the late Sen. Everett M. Dirksen of Ill.

Two Papers Dump Ads for X-Rated Films

Jacksonville, Fla. — (NC) — Daily newspapers here have adopted a policy of refusing to accept advertisements of X-rated movies, as well as of movies that have not been rated.

The Florida Times Union and The Jacksonville Journal editorially stated they realize they will be accused of setting "ourselves up as censors" and of being "hypocritical."

"The basic question is whether by carrying these advertisements, these newspapers are contributing to the decline of public morals while deploring this decline on our editorial pages," the editorial stated.

Vatican Radio Opens New Office

Rome — (RNS) — Jean Cardinal Villot, Vatican secretary of state, officially opened the new headquarters of Vatican Radio in Rome's Via della Conciliazione.

Designed by Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor of radio, and supervised by him until his death, Vatican Radio was inaugurated by Pope Pius XI in 1931.

It operates on international wave lengths, transmits programs in 33 languages, and serves as a channel of communication between the Vatican and church officials in many parts of the world.

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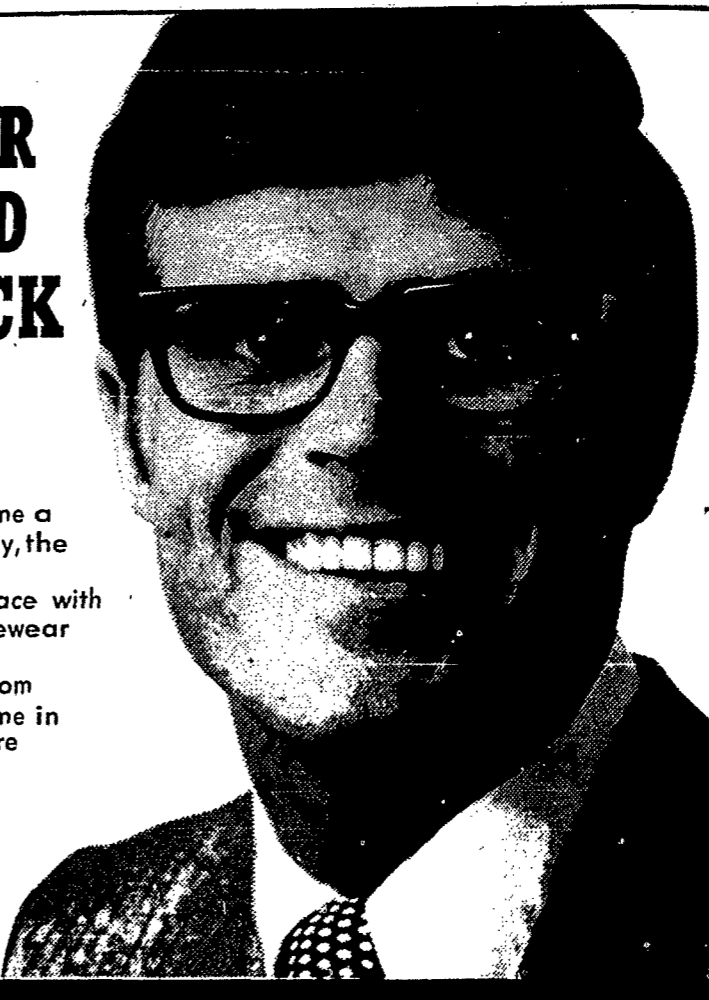
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Communion, Not Unity, Our Goal: Canterbury

London — (NC) — Anglican Archbishop Michael Ramsey of Canterbury has said that the Church of England is seeking communion, not organizational unity, with the Catholic Church.

Archbishop Ramsey in an interview in the *Church Times*, a leading Anglican newspaper, was asked whether an important distinction is to be made between union

of ecclesiastical organizations and unity of spirit, and whether a major mistake is being made in seeking unity of organization.

The archbishop replied: "I don't know anyone who is making such a major mistake. Take relations with the Church of Rome. We are not seeking unity of organization. We are looking for a possible goal whereby there might one day be communion between these Churches."

In reply to a question about possible Anglican acceptance of the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope, Archbishop Ramsey said: "On the 1870 definition of the papacy alone I doubt if union would be possible. But if the collegiality aspect of the Pope's authority continues to grow within the Roman Catholic Church, the situation there may become different."

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Abp. Sheen's Sister Dies

Brookfield, Mo. — (NC) — Mrs. Eva Sheen Walsh, 84, half-sister of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, retired bishop of Rochester, N.Y., died here (Jan. 28).

She was described as "a woman of extraordinary faith" by her pastor, Msgr. Francis O'Duignan, who officiated at funeral services at Immaculate Conception church here (Jan. 31).

"Some say she was fortunate in having such a wonderful brother," Msgr. O'Duignan said, "but I say he is fortunate in having such a wonderful sister."

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U. S. Government securities..... 31,423,880	Demand..... \$103,939,453
State and municipal obligations.... 48,380,900	Time..... 118,610,430
Other bonds and securities..... 349,003	Total deposits..... 222,549,883
Loans..... 134,654,438	Securities sold under agreements
Mortgages..... 26,865,753	to repurchase..... 13,523,600
Total loans and mortgages..... 161,520,191	Interest, taxes and other liabilities.. 2,294,065
Bank premises and equipment..... 2,511,802	Unearned discount..... 8,003,234
Interest receivable..... 1,721,724	Total..... 246,370,782
Other assets..... 2,385,243	Reserve for possible loan losses.... 3,398,697
\$270,056,782	Capital funds:
	Capital stock..... 3,300,000
	Surplus..... 6,700,000
	Undivided profits..... 10,287,303
	Total capital funds..... 20,287,303
	\$270,056,782

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