TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AS ACTORS IN THE
NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR, 1967-1970

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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Denton, Texas

August, 1979
The purpose of this study is to explore the activities of transnational organizations which were involved in the Nigerian civil war, in order to evaluate the hypotheses of this study - that the transnational organizations studied here contributed to the outbreak of the civil war; that they attempted to influence the behavior of the conflicting parties; that they helped to prolong the war; and that they served as instruments of conflict resolution in the civil war.

It is assumed that the civil war, which attracted international attention, is a good case study to analyze the behavior of transnational actors in internal conflict with international dimensions. It is also assumed that this analysis will throw more light on the view that transnational actors have become significant, apart from national governments, in affecting the course of international politics.

Chapter I sets the stage for the analysis which follows, by examining the history of Nigeria before
the outbreak of the civil war. Evidence tends to point to the fact that among all the internal dynamics that precipitated the war, tribal suspicion was the most vivid. In a country brought together by forces of colonial politics, allegiance to a tribal unit and security of tribes became more paramount than national unity.

Chapter II investigates the activities of two oil companies, Shell-BP and AGIP, which were involved in the war. In the course of their involvement each displayed a different behavioral pattern consistent with its objectives. As multinational businesses, their overriding concern was to protect their business interests, and their policies shifted accordingly.

Chapter III explores the involvement of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), a humanitarian actor which until recently, had been neglected by international relations scholars. The ICRC adopted an aggressive stance in its relief operations. This resulted in series of confrontations with the Nigerian authorities. To underscore her rejection of the ICRC approach, the Nigerian Federal Government ordered the Air Force to shoot down a relief plane belonging to the ICRC enroute to Biafra. Subsequently, ICRC relief operations in Nigeria and Biafra virtually came to an end.
Chapter IV deals with the activities of inter-confessional church groups - Caritas Internationalis, World Council of Churches and the Joint Church Aid. These groups adopted a more militant approach than the ICRC. They ignored all Nigeria's warnings, threats and aerial attacks on their relief planes and continued supplying Biafra with relief materials by night flights. In the process, they provided cover for Biafran gun-running planes. Until the war ended, these groups never stopped.

The final chapter summarizes the conclusions arrived at in various chapters of the study. The evidence yielded varying degree of support to the hypotheses. These transnational actors are seen to have, through their different interactions with both sides affected the course of the war and have produced mixed impacts. They produced some evidence for the explanation of behavioral patterns likely to be displayed by transnational actors in similar situations. Also, these interactions are seen as giving some validity to the perceived need to expand the analytic framework of actors in international politics.
PREFACE

The search for an adequate conceptual framework for the analysis of actors in international politics has stimulated recent scholarship in this field. In the process two views have emerged. The first, which can be described as the traditional approach, recognizes the nation-states as the sole actors in international politics. The second approach, which is more recent, asserts that the state-centric view is not an adequate analytic framework for the investigation of contemporary international interactions. Rather, it recognizes the growing significance of new actors which can affect the course of international and domestic politics. It asserts that the framework for analyzing international interactions should, therefore, be expanded to include these transnational organizations. To refuse to do so is to fail to accept the realities of the changing political world. Currently, these two approaches co-exist.

The Nigerian civil war presents a good case for analyzing the behaviors of transnational actors from the second standpoint. The purpose of this study is to investigate the activities of some transnational
organizations which were involved in the war, in order to
assess the relative degree of support or non-support for
the following hypotheses:

1. That the transnational organizations contributed
to the outbreak of the civil war;

2. That they attempted to influence the behavior of
the conflicting leaders in the civil war;

3. That they prolonged the war by their behavior; and

4. That they served as instruments of conflict
resolution in the war.

The units for analysis in this study as transnational
actors are Shell-BP and AGIP Oil Company (both multinational
business enterprises), the International Committee of the
Red Cross (ICRC) (an international humanitarian organi-
zation), and the Catholic and Protestant churches (both
religious groups). Later on in the war, these two formed
the Joint Church Aid, whose activities are also investigated
with those of interconfessional groups.

The inclusion of these diverse corporate bodies in one
study calls for some explanation. For the purpose of this
study, the definition of a "transnational organization"
adopted is that of Keohane and Nye. To them transnational
organizations may include any non-governmental organization
which maintains a global interaction by way of moving
tangible or intangible items across state boundaries.
Thus, "transnational interaction" describes "the movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an intergovernmental organization." The contention here is that these corporate bodies whose activities are the subject of this study readily fall within this definition.

Chapter I explores the historical perspective of the Nigerian nation, her people, and the events that led to the outbreak of the war. The point that emerges in this chapter is that tribal hatred, rivalry, and suspicion culminated in military coup and counter coup as each of the three major tribes, the Hausa-Fulani, the Ibos, and Yorubas struggled to maintain hegemony in the country. This chapter serves as a setting for other chapters.

Chapter II delves into the operations of two oil companies as transnational actors—Shell-BP and AGIP. The first was caught between the conflicting sides over the payment of oil royalties due before the outbreak of the war. The issue generated international diplomacy in Enugu, Lagos, London, and New York as each side tried to receive the payment. In the ensuing confrontation,

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1 Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Jr., Transnational Relations and World Politics (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1973), pp. ix-xii.
Shell-BP found itself in a dilemma. Yet, it exhibited prudent diplomacy, constantly reviewing its stand as the war progressed. Finally, the military situation in favor of Nigeria apparently dictated a firm policy of support for the Nigerian side followed by a payment of the royalties.

On its part, the AGIP Oil Company acted differently because it was operating in a more comfortable political climate than Shell-BP. This comfort was shattered when a unit of Biafran forces raided the company's location in Kwale in the Mid-western Region. In the operation, they killed eleven oil men and took another eighteen prisoners of war—all foreigners. This incident precipitated an international outcry. The outcry became louder when Biafran authorities announced that they would execute the eighteen men for aiding Nigeria in her war of "genocide" against Biafra. Finally, they were released, presumably after a substantial ransom had been paid by the company to the Biafran authorities.

Chapter III studies the activities of "an old organization in a new political controversy," the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC as a humanitarian organization argued that it was its responsibility to provide relief for the war victims on both sides without any hinderance. It based its argument and authority on the
provisions of the Geneva Conventions. In order to serve the war victims, it mounted night flights into Biafran territory. The Nigerian authorities argued that "all is fair in war," and that starvation is a weapon of war. Thus, by displaying what was referred to as "aggressive humanitarianism," the ICRC confronted Nigerian authorities. This was followed by the shooting down of an ICRC plane and the final ejection of the ICRC from Nigeria.

Chapter IV treats the activities of interconfessional groups—Roman Catholic and Protestant churches' relief agencies—Caritas Internationalis and the World Council of Churches. These bodies adopted stubborn attitudes in their relief operations. They continued to supply Biafra not only with relief materials, but also with equipment to improve Biafra's only airstrip in order to make it safe for their relief planes.

Like the Red Cross, the churches did not accept Nigeria's argument that all is fair in war, but unlike the Red Cross, they did not succumb to Nigeria's pressures. With the later coordinating body, the Joint Church Aid, they did not save Biafra in the long run, but they helped prolong her life and saved many of her people.

Chapter V summarizes the conclusions of each of the chapters as they affect each of the hypotheses, but it goes further. It draws from the literature of international
politics relevant to translational interactions. Thus, in a section entitled "Comparative Transnational Behavior," the point is made that transnational actors, while operating in the same political system, may behave differently according to their objectives and more so according to the political environment that affects each of them in the political system. Also, since these transnational actors were able to affect the course of the war differently, the assumption is that other actors might behave similarly in a similar situation and may likely change their behaviors in different situations. Therefore, it may be inadequate to assume nation-states as the sole actors in international politics, because the Nigerian case points to the fact that nongovernmental actors can influence international politics as well. As Arnold Wolfers pointed out, states are by no means the only actors in world politics, "the Vatican, the Arabian-American Oil Company, and a host of nonstate entities are able on occasion to affect the course of international events."²

The study shows also that humanitarian actors may ignore political implications in order to achieve

humanitarian objectives, and this, in turn, may cause a change in the pattern of international interactions. Humanitarian organizations as actors should be given more attention by scholars of international relations. As the Nigerian civil war shows, they are becoming increasingly significant in international politics.

Sources for this study included Biafran, British, Nigerian, and other governments' documents; United States Congressional reports and hearings; press releases of various groups and actors such as reports of ICRC, releases of Joint Church Aid; newspaper accounts of reporters; and scholarly writings in professional and scholarly journals. These were augmented with some interviews and with the author's personal diary.

Contrary to a widely held view, Biafran documents are found in reasonable quantity at the Library of Congress in the United States, at the library of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs in Lagos, and at the libraries of Lagos, Ibadan, and Ahmadu Bello Universities. During my two visits to London in 1977 and 1978, I found some data also available in several libraries in the British capital. More than anywhere else, these are largely newspaper reports and articles, and unpublished materials released by both conflicting parties.
In making references to newspapers in this study, an attempt has been made to include the date and page of each publication. Unfortunately, some of the materials used were clippings from some Nigerian, British, and American newspapers, and in some cases, their page numbers are missing. The result is that some references to newspapers in this study are made without the page numbers.

One more point must be stressed here. Because of the wartime situation, the keeping of documents and maintenance of accurate and regular records of events in Biafra was difficult. Because of this, it was found helpful to utilize entries in my personal diary kept during the war. This diary, which is in the form of a notebook, contains about 240 entries with some major summaries of a particular year's events. Entries were made occasionally, and the length of each entry depends on the particular event or information. When events occurred more regularly in Biafra, particularly in 1968 and 1969, entries were made more frequently. It is to be understood that during the war, rumors were rampant in Biafra. However, the entries in the dairy were derived from personal experience when I was working for the Biafran Rehabilitation Commission as a refugee camp director at St. Michael's camp in Obudi Agwa near Owerri and at St. Charles camp, Ogbor in Moaise division, and later on as a chief transport officer for the
World Council of Churches at their provincial headquarters at Egbu in Owerri from May, 1969, to the end of the war. The diary was kept from May 24, 1967, through March, 1970. References to it in this study have been very few. Moreover, the conclusions relevant to the hypotheses are based on the overall data and not primarily on this diary. Whenever information in it has been utilized, an attempt has been made to support it with other information.

Finally, it is necessary to point out the methodology used in this study. While efforts have been made to meet the standards of the scientific method, because of the nature of this study historical methodology has been adopted. Therefore, it must be understood that conclusions reached in this study regarding these hypotheses are based on the probability of the evidence presented and are in no way based on statistical methodology.

This study is the result of many years of endeavor. It represents the belief of this University that a man's intellectual ability does not depend on the location of his country of origin, the color of his skin, or the accent of his voice, but on his willingness to accept the knowledge from those who open their doors to let him learn from them, so that he, in turn, can serve mankind.

Lawrence Chuks Osuji,
August, 1979.
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CHAPTER I


An analysis of the activities of transnational organizations in the Nigerian conflict should begin with a review of the factors that precipitated the conflict. This will provide a setting for the understanding of the events which took place and the intervening actions of the transnational organizations. A sketchy narration of these events follows.

Three factors gave rise to the conflict in Nigeria upon which other variables operated—the diversities of the people and the artificiality of the federation which attempted to lump together people of cultural heterogeneity in a complex federal machinery, the imbalance of the Nigerian economy, and religious differences.

The People and Their Tribes

Nigeria has a population of approximately 55 million according to the 1963 national census.¹ The population is made up of three main tribal groups and about two dozen other tribal minority groups.

The most numerous of these tribes is the Hausa-Fulani, located in the North, with a common language. The Hausas are in majority but the Fulanis have provided the hereditary rulers, the Emirs and Sultans, and have dominated all other administrative positions.

The second most numerous tribe is Ibo, located in the Eastern Region. This is the most aggressive and enterprising of all the tribes and before the war dominated most of the federal government posts. Ibos were found in large numbers in other areas of the federation, particularly in the Northern Region where they were active in almost every facet of the local economy and in educational institutions. Their aggressiveness and domineering tendencies incensed other tribes and earned the Ibos their dislike.

The third most numerous tribe is Yoruba, located in the Western Region. Unlike the other two main tribes, the Yoruba tribe is spared minority problems in its territory. Before the civil war that Yorubas were in active competition with Ibos for federal jobs because each tribe had produced well-educated personnel. In terms of national and tribal conflicts which had in the past erupted in the country, the position of the Yoruba tribe was often blurred. This had earned the Yorubas the ridicule of other tribes as being inconsistent.

In addition to the three main dominant tribes in the country, there are about twenty-four other tribes
scattered mostly in the Northern and Eastern Regions, including two in the Mid-western part of the country. These tribes have their own culture, language, and different social outlooks from others, thereby further contributing to the complex nature of the Nigerian society. Table I gives the major and minor tribes in Nigeria and shows the regions of each.

**TABLE I**

**MAJOR AND MINOR TRIBES IN NIGERIA AND THEIR REGIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern Region</th>
<th>Eastern Region</th>
<th>Western Region</th>
<th>Mid-Western Region</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hausa-Fulani</td>
<td>Ibo</td>
<td>Yoruba</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanuri</td>
<td>Ibibio</td>
<td></td>
<td>Edo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Busana</td>
<td>Efik</td>
<td></td>
<td>Itskeri</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kamberawa</td>
<td>Ijaw</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ijaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nupe</td>
<td>Iyalla</td>
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<tr>
<td>Margi</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ogoni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keđe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biron</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jakun</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gwari</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manbila</td>
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<td>Igbira</td>
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<td>Igala</td>
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<td>Idoma</td>
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<td>Tiv</td>
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<td>Basakomo</td>
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Linguistically, there are several scores of languages spoken in Nigeria. As Walter Schwarz puts it, "Nigerians themselves are as varied as their environment, though their tribal groups are divided more by language, culture and history than by race."\(^2\)

Essentially because of this network of ethnic complexities based on tribes, rivalry which sometimes reached the level of hatred became a common feature in the Nigerian society. Tribal ethnicity is perhaps the most dangerous type of ethnicity because of its peculiar features. Tribal ethnicity, according to Enloe, is "more exclusive than other sorts of ethnic groups because membership in tribe is formal and the group is highly integrated."\(^3\) Because of this integrative characteristic, Nigerian tribes, particularly the three major ones, are continuously involved in struggles for the control of federal offices.


\(^3\)Cynthia Enloe, Ethnicity and Political Development (Boston, 1973), p. 25.
The federal civil services became a center for tribal exchange of favors and nepotism. The Ibos, who have dominated most of the federal civil service posts by reason of their education and experience, began to feel the pressure from other tribes and viewed this as an attempt to dislodge them from their entrenched positions. On the other hand, the Hausas and Fulanis, which controlled the federal Parliament because of their population, felt that they should equally control the administrative machinery or at least receive a fair share commensurate with their political power.

As bribery and corruption became almost a recognized pattern of official custom, the mere possession of a surname indicating one's tribe assured one of a job in the federal service, provided the departmental head was of the same tribe.

All these exposed the unworkability of the federal system in Nigeria. The consequence of these tribal feuds and rivalry came to a head when on the early morning of January 15, 1966, a group of young army officers, predominantly Ibos, carried out a military coup and toppled the government of the Prime Minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a Northerner.4

Either due to an inconclusive nature of the coup or due to a deliberate calculation: of the planners, two important political leaders from the North, the Prime Minister, and Sarduana of Sokoto, the leader of the Northern Peoples Congress and hereditary leader of the North, were killed. Also, the Premier of Western Nigeria, Samuel Akintola, was killed in the coup. Table II gives the number of people killed and their tribal distributions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions of Origin</th>
<th>Politicians</th>
<th>Army Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-West</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As could be seen from Table II above, an aspect of the coup which gave it a tribal complexion was that except for one all the army officers killed in the coup were Northerners and Yorubas. Although the January coup was widely welcomed throughout the country and the planners
acclaimed as patriots, but its result indeed baffled other tribes, particularly the Hausa-Fulani. As a result of the coup, the people of Northern Nigeria went into a period of comprehensive appraisal of its short-term and long-term effects. Moreover, the fact that the new military leader, Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi was an Ibo gave the Hausa-Fulani tribe much concern.\(^5\)

Apparently underrating the impact of the January coup, particularly the genuine fears which it left in the minds of the skeptical Northerners, Major-General Ironsi set out himself to revert the country into a unitary system of government. Neither patriotism nor mere transparent honesty could justify his mistake in reverting the country to a unitary system.

Two actions of Ironsi's regime sparked national resentment, particularly in the North—the promulgation of a Unification Decree No. 34, and the banning of tribal unions and political parties.\(^6\) According to the provisions of the Unification Decree, the four regions of Nigeria were to be known as Provinces.\(^7\)

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\(^7\)Ibid.
It was clear that what the Ironsi regime intended to do was to remove all the manifestations of tribalism and regionalism which were undermining the concept of nationalism and thereby continuing to threaten national unity. But by taking this action, the regime underrated very much the strength of tribalism in the country. To the Northerners, for the government to be in the hands of an Ibo was a sure way of perpetuating the domination of other tribes by Ibos. This fear was justified, because under the federal system Ibos had resented the domination of the political power by the more backward but more populous North. Therefore, the North feared that the Ironsi regime represented a loss of that political power.

The Northerners strongly feared the gradual Ibo takeover of the country because of the Ibos' higher degree of education and technological and managerial ability. Already, according to the Northerners, the Ibos filled nearly all the public service posts in the federation and they feared that soon it would be Ibos all over every facet of the federal establishment.8

The Second Military Coup

Given the mood of the people in the North, it could be said with some justification that the government of

8Carolyn K. Colwell, Biafra: A Chronology of Develop-
ments Attending the Secession of the Eastern Region of
Major-General Aguiyi Ironsi did little or nothing to remove the impression that the January coup was part of an Ibo master plan to perpetuate their domination of other tribes in the country.

Embittered by the killings of their people in the January coup, their anger aggravated by the Unification Decree, the North could not wait any longer for the Ironsi regime to do something to allay their fears. After all, they seemed to say, Ironsi was another Ibo man. In May, 1967, the entire North went amock.

Violence and rioting directed against Easterners living in the North erupted over the entire North. This was stopped after an urgent appeal from the North Military Governor, Hassan Katsina. Suddenly, an uneasy calm was restored. But only for a short time.

In July again, a combination of army mutiny and pogrom (directed against Easterners, specifically against Ibos) resumed and thousands of Easterners were killed, while hundreds of thousand others were maimed or wounded. The army mutiny spread to other parts of the country except to the East. When the smoke cleared on July 29, Ironsi was gone with his regime, having been killed in the West where he was a guest of the Military Governor.

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of that region, who also was killed in the second coup.\textsuperscript{10}

Table III shows the number of army officers killed in the July coup and their tribal distributions.

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Ranks} & \textbf{Eastern Region} & \textbf{Western Region} & \textbf{Mid-Western Region} \\
\hline
Major-General & 1 & - & - \\
Lt. Colonels & 1 & 1 & 1 \\
Majors & 9 & - & 2 \\
Captains & 11 & - & - \\
Lieutenants & 11 & 4 & 2 \\
Other ranks & 153 & 3 & 14 \\
Total & 186 & 8 & 19 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Army Officers Killed in the July Coup and Their Tribal Distributions*}
\end{table}


As a result of the July 1969 coup and the widespread rioting and violence which preceded it, Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, a Northerner, became the new Head of State.\textsuperscript{11}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{10} Daily Times (Lagos), August 2, 1966, p. 1.
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{11} Eastern Nigerian Ministry of Information, \textit{January 15: Before and After} (Enugu, 1964). In this publication the government of Eastern Nigeria tried to deny Federal Military Government's contention that the January 15 coup was Ibo affairs.
\end{flushleft}
Gowon's choice was significant because he is a member of a small northern minority tribe and was supposed to command confidence among various tribes, particularly among Ibo and Hausa-Fulani.

On assuming office, Gowon almost spoke the mind of the entire nation when he declared:

As a result of the recent events and the other previous ones, I have come to strongly believe that we cannot honestly and sincerely continue in this wise, as the basis of trust and confidence in our unitary system of government has not been able to stand the test of time. Suffice it to say that putting all considerations to test . . . political, economic, as well as social—the base for unity is not there or is so badly rocked, not only once but several times.¹²

In an apparent response to Gowon's speech, Lieutenant Colonel Ojukwu quickly called on the government to take immediate action so that "the Republic of Nigeria be split into its component parts."¹³ Gowon immediately issued a new decree, reverting the country to its old federal structure and thereby establishing a Federal Military Government.¹⁴ In addition, Gowon summoned, with


the agreement of other military governors, a Constitutional Conference made up of the representatives of the four regions.

Opening the conference in Lagos in September, 1966, Gowon declared:

It is very clear to me that it will be economically and politically suicidal to harbor any idea of complete break-up of the federation. Therefore, we seem to be left with the alternatives of a Federation with a strong central government; a federation with a weak central government; a confederation; on the other hand, it may be that through your deliberations which commences here today, we may be able to devise a form of association with a new name yet to be found in any political dictionary in the world but peculiar to Nigeria.\(^{15}\)

Unfortunately, before the conference could make substantial progress, ugly rumors and reports spread in the North that Northerners in the East were being massacred by the Easterners. As a result of this and as a result of already explosive situations, riots again broke out in cities throughout the Northern Region. Again mutinous troops joined civilians to slaughter Ibo residents in the North who had managed to survive the two previous similar outbreaks. In apparent retaliation disturbances followed

\(^{15}\)Kirk-Greene, Crisis and Conflict, pp. 216-217; Daily Times (Lagos), September 13, 1966, p. 1.
in the Eastern Region where Ibos attacked Northern tribesmen in their midst.\textsuperscript{16}

In order to arrest the situation, in an impromptu address to the Constitutional Conference on October 3, 1966, Gowon admitted:

Gentlemen, I will tell you that, certainly there has been a damage. I think that is what we never seem to admit when there is something like that . . . . I am determined to do what I can even if it means my life to get this country back to its proper shape. . . . To our Eastern friends, for God's sake, please don't lose hope. Let us try and see what we can do to mend what has happened. Give me a chance and I am quite convinced I will be able to do something very shortly.\textsuperscript{17}

Certainly three factors compounded Gowon's tasks and made his effectiveness difficult. The first was the continued increase in the number of Ibos who were maimed and butchered in the North. Reports of further violence in the North continued to mount in the East as Easterners poured home with horrible stories and with some headless dead bodies of Ibos brought back. The second factor was Ojukwu's unwillingness to recognize Gowon as the new legitimate leader of the federal government. Third, the unruly attitudes of the Northern soldiers both in Lagos and in the West.

\textsuperscript{16} Statement by Chief Anthony Enahoro, Leader of Federal Delegation to the Kampala Peace Conference on Monday, August 12, 1968 (Kampala, 1968).

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid.
After almost two months of wrangling over the construction of a new constitutional framework which would fit the needs of the entire country and each tribal group, the members of the Supreme Military Council, including Colonel Ojukwu, met in Aburi, Ghana, in January, 1967. As a result of this conference, the Nigerian military leaders concluded that force should be renounced as a method of arbitrating regional grievances. They strongly reaffirmed their faith in Nigeria as a national unit which should be maintained; and recognized the need for increased regional autonomy.

The result of the Aburi Conference was regarded as a major victory for Ojukwu and the Easterners because following the past events in the country, they were losing faith in the federal system. Also, since the total effect of the Aburi Conference was greater autonomy for the regions, Ojukwu had a lot to be cheered about. But on their part, according to John Stremlau,

once the civilian officials in Lagos had digested the Aburi communique, the cadre of permanent

---


19 Ibid.
secretaries closest to Gowon . . . drafted a lengthy memorandum warning of the full implications of "concurrence." 20

Apparently skeptical of the intentions of Gowon and his government in implementing the Aburi agreement, Ojukwu warned that he would not attend future meetings of the military governors until the Aburi agreements were fully implemented. Further, he announced that he would move to implement the Aburi agreements in his own terms within his region if the federal government had not done so by March 31, 1967. 21

As a result of Ojukwu's threat and in order to safeguard greater authority for the federal government, Gowon issued Decree No. 8. This decree partially implemented the Aburi agreements by giving the regional military governors a veto power in some areas, and thus slightly decentralizing the federal authority. Under this decree, no decision could be made in matters concerning federal commerce, communications, foreign affairs without the concurrence of all military governors and the Supreme Commander, Lieutant Colonel Gowon. However, a state

of emergency could be declared in any region without the concurrence of its military governor.\textsuperscript{22} The terms of the decree also allowed the federal government to step in and rule any region in order to prevent secession or any violation of the constitution.\textsuperscript{23}

Based on its own interpretation of the Aburi agreement, the Eastern government rejected this decree on the grounds that the power of the federal government to declare a state of emergency in any region was contrary to the intended efforts of the Aburi accord. The Easterners believed that the Aburi decisions precluded the centralization of power, and, therefore, did not allow the federal government to override unanimous decisions of military governors or unilaterally declare a state of emergency in a region.\textsuperscript{24}

The Eastern regional government issued the Revenue Collection Edict of 1967, which declared that all revenues collected in that region which had previously been payable to the federal government would as of April 1, 1967, be payable to the Eastern regional treasury. By this action, Colonel Ojukwu had acted to implement the Aburi accord as he saw fit.\textsuperscript{25}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{22}Kirk-Greene, op. cit., pp. 372-374. \\
\textsuperscript{23}Stremiau, op. cit., pp. 47-50. \textsuperscript{24}Ibid. \\
\end{flushright}
Furthermore, the Eastern Nigerian government issued a Statutory Bodies Edict which had the effect of taking over from the federal control all federal services such as the control of ports, railways, post offices, telegraph services, national broadcasting, coal mining, shipping, and marketing. Ojukwu claimed that these measures were necessary because the federal government had stopped paying the workers in those bodies.\textsuperscript{26}

Gowon, still in control at Lagos, called for the meeting of the Supreme Military Council. The Council issued a communiqué promising stern measures against the recalcitrant Eastern Region if it continued its defiance of the authorities of the federal military government.\textsuperscript{27}

Up until this time, it was not clear where the population of Yorubas, the third largest tribal group, stood on the conflict. As has been indicated, in the first military coup of January 15, 1966, Chief Akintola, the Premier of that Region was killed. But his death did not provoke widespread disenchantment among Yorubas, because he had contributed to the political downfall of Chief Awolowo in 1963. Secondly, Akintola did not enjoy a popular following among the electorate in the Western Region and


\textsuperscript{27}African Diary, April 17/24, 1967.
had been accused of having rigged the regional election of late 1965. This precipitated widespread violence and sectional killings among different political followings in that region. Thus with the death of Akintola, Awolowo was the undisputed leader of the Yorubas, and in time of national crises such as one that had gripped Nigeria in 1967, his view represented the views of a wide spectrum of the Yoruba tribe.

So it was important when in a mammoth rally on May 1, 1967, Awolowo declared that if the Eastern Region or any part of the federation were pushed out of the federation, that the West and the federal territory of Lagos would also break with the federation. But when Eastern Nigeria later on seceded from the federation on May 30, 1967, Awolowo declared for the federal government and accepted the job of a Commissioner for Finance.28

Before Eastern Nigeria declared her independence of Nigeria several attempts were made to keep the country intact. But perhaps angered by the overwhelming atrocities committed against his people and lacking faith in the federal government's ability to protect his people, Ojukwu finally called it a day when he had made up his mind

(in response to the unrelenting rage from his people) declared the Republic of Biafra.  

Earlier on May 27, 1967, Gowon obviously armed with sufficient information that Ojukwu would declare Eastern Nigeria a separate nation before long, made a strong effort to undermine Ojukwu's design by creating twelve states out of the federation, of which three were in the East and two of these were in the minority areas.  

With the creation of states, with the declaration of Eastern Nigeria as the Republic of Biafra, and with no possible solution to the crisis, the Nigerian conflict entered a new phase. It was this phase which in the main attracted international attention and obviously got the attention of the transnational organizations whose activities are the subject of this study.

As indicated earlier there are two other factors which helped to precipitate the civil war in Nigeria in addition to the varied nature of the Nigerian people and the artificiality of the federation. After narrating how the tribal factors and the uneasy nature of the federation contributed in promoting the conflicts, the other two factors will now be reviewed. These factors are the


imbalance of Nigerian economy and the religious differences among the people.

Other Factors

The imbalance of the country's economy was said to be one of the factors that contributed to the outbreak of the 1967 civil war and events that gave rise to it. Like the political factors, economic imbalance results from the artificiality of the federation, the extensive nature of the country with divergent geographical and physical environment, and the dissimilarity in climate which accounted for different agricultural products from different parts of the country. These natural differences result in some parts of the country having more natural resources than other parts. The result of this was hatred and envy. Table IV shows the economic resources from each region.

On the eve of the outbreak of civil war in Nigeria, the principal earner of foreign exchange was crude oil, representing 84 per cent of the country's exports. From Table IV it is clear that only two regions—Eastern and Mid-Western—were producers of crude oil. Of the total export of crude oil in 1967 before the civil war, about
70 per cent was produced in the Eastern region, while the remaining 30 per cent was produced in the Mid-West.  

TABLE IV

ECONOMIC RESOURCES FROM EACH REGION*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern Region</th>
<th>Eastern Region</th>
<th>Mid-Western Region</th>
<th>Western Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ground nuts</td>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td>Timber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin Ore</td>
<td>Palm Oil</td>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>Cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hides and Skins</td>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>Limestone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Limestone</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cocoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>Land Zinc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rubber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From "Understanding the Nigerian Crisis," Government of Mid-Western Nigeria, Benin City.

Allocation of revenues to Nigeria's four regions was based on a complex but uneven formula of revenue allocation. This formula among its shortcomings was the fact that regions which produced more natural resources were not given priority or extra allocation as a result of this. This obvious imbalance had continued to be a source of friction among the regions.

Easterners had felt that since they provided the country with more natural resources, and thereby contributing more than 72 per cent of the country's revenue, that they should be allowed a substantial amount of the income. On the other hand, other regions, particularly the North had felt that since allocation of revenue was based on population of the regions, and that since the country is a unit, that no special consideration should be given to the Eastern region. Furthermore, that before petroleum was discovered, it was other regions which had provided the country with its revenue need through agricultural products, it is time for the East to play its part.

The consequence of economic imbalance is that it became a factor in endless tribal rivalry and deepened the hatred between regions. Finally, another factor which contributed to the conflict of 1967 in Nigeria was the religious difference among the people of Nigeria. Although during the civil war, both sides tried to play down the religious aspect of the conflict, its implicit consequence was obvious.

It must be pointed out that the percentage of Northerners who are Christians are those in the lower North, with boundaries with Eastern Region and Mid-Western Regions. With such clear religious differences in
population between North and East, as shown in Table V, values and beliefs were incompatible. From time to time conflicts arose in matters that affected the entire federation. For example, it was not uncommon for Christians to complain loudly about the number of Muslim holidays that are observed in the country, which are far greater than the number of Christian holidays that are similarly observed. When the civil war broke out, Easterners tried to exploit its religious undertones. This point will be explained further in Chapter IV when the activities of the churches in the civil war are discussed.

**TABLE V**

**RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION BY REGIONS INCLUDING LAGOS TERRITORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Region</td>
<td>21,386,450</td>
<td>2,681,437</td>
<td>5,540,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(71.7%)</td>
<td>(9.7%)</td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Region</td>
<td>29,964</td>
<td>9,573,622</td>
<td>2,790,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.3%)</td>
<td>(77.2%)</td>
<td>(22.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Region</td>
<td>4,753,225</td>
<td>5,359,075</td>
<td>818,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.5%)</td>
<td>(49.0%)</td>
<td>(7.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Western Region</td>
<td>106,857</td>
<td>1,393,009</td>
<td>1,035,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.2%)</td>
<td>(54.9%)</td>
<td>(40.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos Territory</td>
<td>294,694</td>
<td>363,384</td>
<td>4,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44.3%)</td>
<td>(54.6%)</td>
<td>(1.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the foregoing review of the factors that contributed to the outbreak of the civil war, it is hoped that the proper setting has been provided for the analysis of the activities of transnational organizations in the conflict.
CHAPTER II

SHELL-BP AS A PIONEER

The first transnational actor whose activities in the Nigerian civil war are to be analyzed in this study is the Shell-BP, a multinational business corporation with a major exploration right in Nigeria at the time of the civil war in 1967. Before delving into the activities of Shell-BP, it will be necessary to state the hypotheses of this study:

1. That the transnational organizations as actors in the Nigerian civil war contributed to the outbreak of the civil war;

2. That they attempted to influence the behavior of the conflicting leaders in the civil war;

3. That they attempted to prolong the war by their behaviors; and

4. That they served as instruments of conflict resolution in the civil war.

Although at the time of the outbreak of the civil war, there were more than ten major oil companies operating in Nigeria, only Shell-BP and to a less degree the AGIP Oil company were involved in the civil war by reasons to be explained later in this paper. Shell-BP is a combination of Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum. AGIP is an Italian Oil company.
Although at the time of the civil war there were about ten oil companies, the Shell-BP was the first to start the prospecting of oil in Nigeria and had the greatest number of concessions. Shell-BP's search for oil in Nigeria began in 1937 and, even by oil industry standards, the going was tough. A vast area of hazardous terrain had to be explored in a difficult climate to find a notoriously elusive mineral. For many years the company had to labor tirelessly in the delta area of Nigeria where it was hoped that oil could be found.

The company's years of frustrations and disappointments came to an end in 1956 when a large quantity of crude oil was discovered in promising quantities at Oloibiri in the Yenagoa province of the Eastern region. This find was rapidly developed and two years later the first shipment of oil was made to Europe. Production in that first year averaged only 4,400 barrels a day, and there lay ahead the formidable task of building up this small-scale success into a large and vigorous national industry. But from then on Shell-BP's production continued to grow as its investment in the country equally continued to grow.²

Thus, according to one ex-Shell-BP official,

Thirty years' work and one hundred and fifty million pounds were poured into developing oil in Nigeria. By June 1967, the Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company was exporting over 500,000 barrels a day.

Following Shell-BP's pioneering effort, a number of other oil companies joined in the search after 1966, and some have met with success—though not to be compared with the enviable achievement of Shell-BP. On the eve of the civil war, there were about fourteen oil companies producing between them more than 1 million barrels of oil per day. Table VI shows the companies operating in Nigeria and the concession situation as of March 31, 1967.

Because of its pioneering efforts, Shell-BP was able to enjoy a dominating position in the oil industry of Nigeria until the outbreak of the civil war. According to Table VI, of all the nine oil companies granted concessions,

---
3 Stanley Webb, "Then the War Came," Shell Magazine 49 (February, 1969), 31-32.
**TABLE VI**

COMPANIES OPERATING IN NIGERIA AND CONCESSION SITUATION AS OF MARCH 31, 1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Company</th>
<th>Concession Held**</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Overseas Petroleum Company</td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain Petroleum</td>
<td>OPL</td>
<td>10,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOBI Exploration Nigeria Limited</td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian AGIP Oil Company</td>
<td>OML</td>
<td>2,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigerian Gulf Oil Company Limited</td>
<td>OML</td>
<td>1,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips Petroleum Company</td>
<td>OPL</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAFRAR Nigeria Limited</td>
<td>OPL</td>
<td>2,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenecco Nigeria Incorporated</td>
<td>OPL</td>
<td>2,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria</td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>1,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>7,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CSOPL</td>
<td>1,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OML</td>
<td>7,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OML</td>
<td>7,330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**CSOPL—Continental Shelf Oil Prospecting License
OPL —Oil Prospecting License (Land and Territorial Waters)
OML —Oil Mining License (Land and Territorial Waters)
OEL —Oil Exploration License.
Shell-BP concessional rights accounted for 35 per cent of the entire areas granted. In addition to having the widest areas of square miles to prospect for oil, Shell-BP was also granted both oil prospecting license and oil mining license.

The giant position of Shell-BP in the Nigerian oil industry was more profound even when compared with the positions of the major oil companies like Mobil Exploration which held a mere 3.7 per cent of SAFRAP, a major French Oil Company then in Nigeria, holding 17.3 per cent of the concessions.

What this means is that at the outbreak of the civil war in Nigeria, Shell-BP was contributing 35 per cent of the country's revenue from oil companies. The amount of revenue accruing to the government is shown in Table VII. In addition to payments made to the Nigerian government by the oil companies from royalty, rents, permits, profit taxes, and other related items, substantial amounts of payments were made specifically by those in the exploration business. (See Table VIII.)

From the above three tables two important facts emerge. In the first place, oil companies were vital aspects of Nigeria's economy. In the second place, since Shell-BP contributed more than 35 per cent of the total revenue
### TABLE VII

REVENUE ACCRUING TO GOVERNMENT (IN NIGERIAN CURRENCY)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rents</td>
<td>3,861,076</td>
<td>4,355,679</td>
<td>4,948,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,345,571</td>
<td>7,245,932</td>
<td>10,693,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>634,859</td>
<td>120,319</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,165</td>
<td>4,400</td>
<td>2,544,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>199,372</td>
<td>2,861,187</td>
<td>2,861,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>N8,042,043</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,597,517</strong></td>
<td><strong>19,549,003</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Note: h = $2.80.

### TABLE VIII

PAYMENTS MADE IN NIGERIA BY OIL EXPLORATION COMPANIES 1967*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>h</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>d**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water, railway, road, and air freight</td>
<td>548,445</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and fuel purchased</td>
<td>8,726,987</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electric power</td>
<td>201,647</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages and salaries</td>
<td>3,811,260</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rents (excluding rents on OPLs and OMLs)</td>
<td>523,449</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compensation on Farmland, etc.</td>
<td>777,601</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbour dues</td>
<td>2,764,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other payments (including payments to Contractors in Nigeria)</td>
<td>26,098,924</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43,492,214</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**h=pounds; s=shillings; d=pence in old Nigerian sterling. 12 pennies=1 shilling; 20 shillings=1 pound.
made by the oil companies, the company, therefore, was more vital to the country than other oil companies. The obvious implication of this is that in any civil disorder the oil companies were bound to be involved and Shell-BP more so directly or indirectly.\(^5\) Moreover, in an era when petroleum was becoming a global commodity, it was difficult for all the oil companies in Nigeria to stand idly by from the internal politics. They might not wish to be involved, but as Lieutenant Colonel Ojukwu put it, "the oil companies, poor chaps, have nothing to do with this conflict, but they are likely to be used as a ping-pong ball in it."\(^6\)

What this means is that the two oil companies which were actually involved in the Nigerian civil war, Shell-BP and the AGIP oil company, did so because they were drawn into it, if Ojukwu's assessment is accepted. However, a further examination of the factors, the manner and the level of their involvement should provide a proper setting for a theoretical explanation of their transnational action. This will further provide a basis to answer some of our investigative questions.


The Dilemma of Shell-BP

Three factors drew Shell-BP into the Nigerian conflict. These were geographical, economic, and political factors. The first was unavoidable; the second was coincidental; and the third was planned. Each of these factors needs a little elaboration.

As pointed out in Chapter I, in the Eastern Region which stretched up to the Atlantic Ocean in the Southern part of Nigeria lies the greater portion of the country's crude oil reservoir. Geographically, "the eastern region produces about two-thirds of Nigeria's oil. The other third comes from the mid-west region." For example, of all the 243 drilling wells active as of March 31, 1967, about 172 were located in the Eastern region.

Statistically, before the outbreak of the civil war, the importance of petroleum and the oil companies cannot be overemphasized. Both the oil companies and the country were enjoying a glorious boom. For example, in the area of exploration, the American Overseas Petroleum Limited recorded substantial gains in continental shelf oil prospecting licenses. The company drilled about eight exploration wells in one year preceding the conflict.

The Nigerian AGIP Oil Company Limited carried out the drilling of five exploration wells. Two of these yielded a greater dividend in the same period. On its part Shell-BP drilled about forty-five wells to a total depth of about 450,400 feet. Of these wells, thirteen found oil and were suspended for future completion while twenty-five others were dry or uncommercial and were abandoned. Four of these drilling wells were producing large quantities of crude immediately before the war.

On the whole, in both oil and gas production areas, the country's future was solidly bright. The average production rate of 574,000 barrels a day in March 1967 was the highest for any month of the year 1967. This represented an increase of about 65 per cent over the figure of 347,000 barrels of oil per day for the corresponding period in 1966.

The benefit of these booms yielded an increase in the employment of Nigerians. For example, before the oil companies were involved in the conflict, the oil exploration companies employed a total of 3,252 Nigerians in the year 1966-67. Of these sixteen were occupying management positions. Another 141 were employed in professional posts, and 465 occupied supervisory posts. Further, a total of 1,043 were skilled workers, 969 were employed as unskilled
workers, and another 619 were employed in various other types of work.

Since Shell-BP was the leader in the petroleum industry in Nigeria, and since most of the country's petroleum deposits were in the Eastern Region, it followed that Shell-BP's assets were mostly located in the Biafran territory. Therefore, it is assumed that any internal disorder in Nigeria which affected the Eastern Region which became Biafra, would also affect Shell-BP directly or indirectly.

The second assumption here is that after many years of piercing through the woods, swamps, and jungles in the Eastern Region in search of crude oil, Shell-BP must have in the process employed more Easterners in its operations. Although there were no separate statistical figures available showing the ethnic breakdown of Nigerian workers employed by Shell-BP, it was not doubtful that the majority were certainly Easterners. Of these the greatest percentage must have been Ibos.

From these assumptions, it is possible to provide an estimate table, showing the ethnic breakdown of the Nigerian workers employed by Shell-BP as of March 31, 1967. The base for this estimate should be the total number of 3,252 Nigerians employed by all the oil companies as shown in 1967 annual reports.\(^9\) (See Table IX.)

\(^9\)Ibid.
TABLE IX

ESTIMATE OF ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF NIGERIAN WORKERS IN SHELL-BP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Employed by Shell-BP</th>
<th>Other Companies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easterners, (Ibos, Ijaws, Efiks, Etc.)</td>
<td>1,626</td>
<td>722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Yorubas, Hausa, etc.)</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,168</td>
<td>1,084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Oil companies have the practice of employing local people wherever the field is located.

These figures show that of the 3,252 Nigerian employees of the oil companies, Shell-BP was the greatest single employer. Of the total figure, the company employed 2,168, representing 66.6 per cent. Of this figure Easterners employed by Shell-BP numbered 1,626, representing 75 per cent. It is reasonable to assume that once the country was faced with conflict which affected Easterners, Shell-BP would be affected.

The second factor which drew Shell-BP into the Nigerian conflict was economic. This factor seemed to have had greater impact than the other two factors. It was a question of royalty. Who should get it—the Nigerian federal government or the Eastern Nigerian government then threatening to secede? At first glance, the issue looked
simple. But it had all the elements of political and diplomatic dynamite. Moreover, the coincidental nature of the issue suddenly placed Shell-BP, in the words of Kirk-Greene, "between the devil and the deep blue sea." At stake was the payment of oil royalties which were due in July, 1967, for Shell-BP and the Gulf Oil Company. The Gulf Oil Company had no problem deciding to pay its due to the federal government, because all of its operational fields were located in the Mid-western Region. The company was just lucky, but Shell-BP was not. As already outlined, its own operational fields were located in the Eastern Region.

The oil diplomatic drama began when Colonel Ojukwu issued a decree requiring all the oil companies in Biafra (of which Shell-BP virtually accounted for all the production in territory now under Biafran control) to give it information by June 28, 1967, on the amounts due to be paid. The federal government reacted promptly by warning any oil company that intended to make any payment to

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Ojukwu's Biafra. As the drama unfolded, both West Africa and the Financial Times, London, reported that a compromise had been worked out between the international directors of Shell-BP, which allowed a partial payment of taxes and royalties to be made to the Biafran regime, while the other portion was to be paid into an escrow account.12

At first this issue centered around Nigeria, while an exchange of verbal abuse, threats, pressures, and press releases in both Lagos and Enugu continued to increase the tension. From all indications, it was clear that oil would become the main factor in the ensuing confrontation.

Suddenly, an intensive campaign was mounted against Shell-BP, both in Biafra and in Nigeria. In Biafra's big city of Port Harcourt, the operations headquarters of the company, violent demonstrations were carried out against the company, apparently inspired by the government. Troops moved in to occupy strategic positions in the company's premises at Umuomasi near Port Harcourt. Also, a

platoon of soldiers was sent to the company's most important installations, the refinery at Alesa, Eleme.\(^{13}\)

On the Nigerian side, pressures and protests were directed against Shell-BP as well. Stern measures were urged by many segments of the Nigerian society against the company.\(^{14}\) Clearly, the battle line was already drawn. It was drawn between Nigeria and Biafra, but Shell-BP found itself in a tight corner. While the company pondered what to do, the issue picked up momentum and assumed international dimension. This compounded the company's problems.

Several newspapers in London reported that the Board of Directors of Shell-BP had decided to make a token payment in taxes and revenues to the Biafran regime to the tune of £250,000. In addition to the press reports, the London Times reported that the action of the company was taken in order to forestall the destruction of the company's assets in Biafra by the incensed soldiers and furious public.\(^{15}\)


\(^{14}\)"Measures Against Shell-BP Urged," West Africa (May 17, 1967), 967. Many Nigerian newspapers during this period consistently gave extensive coverage on the issue, particularly the New Nigeria (Kaduna), Morning Post (Lagos), and West African Pilot (Lagos).

This action which was intended to appease the Biafrans infuriated the Nigerians. Some reports indicated that what Shell-BP did was merely to express intention to make a token payment in order to save its foreign employees still in the Biafran territory. But to Lagos, and in a situation such as that in which many believed that the decision of Shell-BP might well dictate the subsequent events to come in the conflict, Lagos regarded any intention or promise to pay as an affront. Reaction from Lagos was prompt if not decisive.

The federal government extended its blockade of Biafra to oil tankers. Shell-BP was not saying much, and this attitude did not help. In a succinct editorial, the Daily Times wrote,

Although Shell-BP announced reduction in their oil output from its Port Harcourt operations, blaming this on the federal government's blockade of the area, it omitted to mention the reason for the extension of the blockade to oil tankers. Shell-BP ought to have the moral courage to tell the full story. There is no need to conceal their embarrassment under guarded statements in the hope that Nigerians would not know the facts. . . . There is no doubt that Shell-BP has found themselves in a difficult position, bearing in mind that Ojukwu had stationed his rebel troops around the oil installations and could carry out threats either to destroy the installations or invite a more compliant company to run the oil wells for him.16

According to the *Daily Times*, it had become an open secret both in London and in Lagos that Shell-BP was ready to make some payments to the Biafran authorities.  

Once the federal authorities extended their blockade of Biafra to oil tankers, the British government was drawn into the matter. This was for two main reasons. First, it had a substantial interest in Shell-BP. Second, Great Britain imported 29 per cent of her oil from Nigeria. And third, since the importation of oil from the Middle East was no longer a matter of certainty because of the June 1967 war in the area, to Great Britain, it was essential to maintain a free flow of oil from Nigeria.  

Presented with the imminent loss of oil imports, the British government entered the conflict by obviously adding an international dimension into it. Since the military operation had started on July 6, 1967, it is plausible to infer that her concern must have included the security of her nationals and security of her assets in the war areas of Biafra.

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Apprehensive of the British government's dire need of Nigerian oil, Chief Anthony Enahoro, then Nigeria's Information Commissioner made a hurried trip to London. There he held a press conference, during which he warned the British government against running Nigeria's naval blockade of Biafra. He, however, declared:

Clearly, from what I have said, there is much else besides oil from our two countries, although oil has come very much to the fore lately because of events in the Middle East. Let me say at once that Britain's interest in Nigerian oil is the same as ours—to keep it flowing. I do not doubt that as soon as circumstances permit, the flow will be resumed and will grow.19

On that note, the British government sent a delegation to Lagos apparently to resolve the issue. In a highly concealed meeting between the representatives of the two governments, the legality of the blockade was discussed. Included in the discussion were the questions of payment of oil royalties to the Biafran government—an issue that prompted the blockade in the first place. According to the Daily Times,

Nigeria's imposition of the blockade on tankers evacuating oil from Port Harcourt followed Shell-BP's information of its intention in a letter said to have been sent to rebel leader, Ojukwu, that some oil royalties would be paid to him.20

20 Ibid.
Revealing obvious disagreements between Nigeria and Britain over the oil issue, the federal government issued a statement saying:

The federal government has told Mr. Thomas, the British Minister that its action on the oil blockade was not only valid in international law, but also drawn from the contract existing between the Federal Military Government and the oil companies.  

With apparent failure on the part of the British government to persuade Lagos to lift the blockade, a review of the matter was made in London. It was obvious that the British government was following the progress of military operations then between Nigeria and Biafra. It was equally clear that Shell-BP was more cautiously following the military progress as well. On their side, the Biafran government had continued to hope for the token payment to be made.

Suddenly two events added a twist to the oil diplomacy. First, the federal troops captured Bonny, an important oil terminal on the coast of Biafra. Second, two days later, the Biafran government arrested the General Manager of Shell-BP, Stanley Gray, at Enugu. He was detained at a luxurious Presidential Hotel. The Biafran authorities had stated the reason for the arrest of

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22 Daily Times (Lagos), July 26, 1967; Osuji, op. cit.
Stanley Gray. In a broadcast over Radio Enugu on July 27, the government stated that the invasion of Bonny was masterminded and led by Shell-BP. But it was clear to many that the real reason was not unconnected with the payment of oil royalties by the company. John Stremlau clearly stated the point when he wrote:

Shell-BP was dealt with separately and more aggressively. The most dramatic—if overpublicized—episode in Biafra's brief exposure to oil politics was the arrest of Shell-BP local managing director, Stanley Gray, and his incarceration in the plush Presidential Hotel in Enugu. Nigerian officials believe the incident was a mere ruse to allow the company a way to make at least a token payment to Ojukwu without burning all its bridges with the federal government.23

The arrest and detention of Stanley Gray triggered a network of official and diplomatic maneuvers in London, Lagos, and Enugu. In London, the Royal Dutch-Shell group top executive, F. S. McPadrean was dispatched to Lagos and to Enugu to secure the release of Gray. His arrival was closely followed by a group of six international managing directors of the Shell-BP group on July 30 from Europe and America.24

After intensive all-night negotiations, Gray was released. On reaching Lagos after his release, Gray, in a

23 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 75.
press conference announced that he had signed a note to pay oil royalties to the Biafran authorities. He declared

At the time it was up to him to judge what firm and positive action might be taken by Ojukwu's government if the company did not make the promise. Payment has, in fact, not been made. But it has been made clear to Ojukwu in Enugu that his company was resting on terms of the strictest legality. The legality of oil royalty payment is that our particular company in law is not required to make those payments until within two months of the end of the calendar year; that is, the latest date one could make payment for a particular calendar year would be February 28 if you count leap years.\(^\text{25}\)

Giving further details as to how he secured his release, Gray hinted,

Last Saturday morning, I succeeded in getting what proved to be the final interview with Mr. Ojukwu. This was very early in the morning as I think. It seemed to me that we had come right to the end of the line on a series of discussions which I had held with him . . . . His reaction was that in those circumstances he would make the only decision that he could which was that Shell-BP, having already been instructed to stop operation in the East, would no longer operate.\(^\text{26}\)

Yet the release of Gray did not settle the issue. Rather it intensified it. The theater of the oil diplomacy shifted to London with a pulsating speed. Biafrans were anxious to receive the money already promised. Nigerians were determined to stop Shell-BP from making the payment--


or, if they did, to stop Biafrans from receiving it. The events of the next few weeks after the release of Gray, more than any other thing in this already-complicated issue, cost Biafra a major international and diplomatic setback.

John de St. Jorre has carefully documented the issue more succinctly, and his account throws more light on the intensity of the issue. He wrote:

There was a sudden flurry of diplomatic activity. Behind the scenes pressure on Shell-BP mounted—to pay less, to pay more, to pay nothing at all. The Biafrans were determined to get the full seven million pounds though, even if one accepted their argument of de facto sovereignty, the maximum they could justifiably claim would be the revenues due since the declaration of independence, a little over one million pounds. George Thomas, British minister of state in the Commonwealth Office having reluctantly agreed to Shell-BP's token payment, flew out to Lagos and, unwisely, criticized Gowon's tanker embargo. The Nigerians promptly pointed out that in international law they had the right to impose a blockade on their own coastline and that in company law the oil revenues indisputably belonged to the Federal government. Then a Nigerian delegation appeared in London shopping for arms, introducing a new element into this highly complex power game. Any connection between oil and guns, however, was tartly denied by a British government spokesman. "There's no question of horse-trading," he said, throwing in a new metaphor for good measure.27

What was lacking initially was the clarity of the British government's stand. It was clear that like Shell-BP,

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the British government was caught in the middle, too. Her position was indeed a difficult one.

Even among British government circles, there was a divergence of opinion and a cluster of indecisiveness as to what was the best policy to be adopted. Even within the British press and public, this divergence was equally noticeable.²⁸

Indeed summarized into proper phraseology, there were strictly two opinions—one to support Nigeria and the other to support Biafra. A former British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent has aptly stated the matter:

When evaluating British government policy towards the whole question of the Nigeria-Biafra war, two schools of thought emerge: one claims that the policy was in fact the absence of a policy, the hopeless outcome of a mish-mash of stupidity, apathy, indifference, callousness and ignorance in high place; the other maintains there was a policy from the start, that it was one of total support not for the Nigerian people but for the regime presently in power in Lagos, that it was carefully masked from public view for as long as possible, and that the stupidity of the politicians and the ignorance and apathy of the general public and the men controlling the mass-communication media were used either in the furtherance or the dissimulation of that policy. As an increasing amount of research into the growing pile of documentation available takes place, it is becoming plainer that the evidence supports the latter view.²⁹


Forsyth's assessment notwithstanding, one has to sympathize with the British government over the matter. Britain created Nigeria, nursed her, tutored her in the art of parliamentry democracy (whatever that means in Africa), then finally granted her independence as a sovereign state. The secession of Biafra obviously presented her with an unprecedented dilemma unseen in her annals of colonialism. She was just like a father of two quarrelling children who was asked to decide which of the two children should be given support for existence.

At first the British government vacillated, but as the crisis deepened, she appeared to be leaning towards supporting Nigeria. What brought about this sudden change has been carefully stated by David Hunt, who was the British High Commissioner in Nigeria at the beginning of the crisis.

The crunch came only about a month after the war started. . . . The federal government had placed orders to arms with manufacturers in the United Kingdom and these had applied for the necessary export license. . . . Mr. Wilson listened carefully to our arguments but to him the nub of the matter was that Nigeria was a fellow Commonwealth country in difficulties, that we had equipped her in the first place and, she could therefore expect recontinuity of supply and, on the other hand, that a refusal would be equivalent to intervention in favour of the rebels. He saw very quickly and attached great importance to the point that such an act would damage our interests
not only in Nigeria but also in the rest of Africa.  

It must be stressed that this decision to support Nigeria robbed Biafra of any payment from Shell-BP. Once the British government had taken a stand in Nigeria's favor, although it had previously given the impression that it would not oppose any payment to the Biafran regime, she brought all the machinery of diplomacy and bureaucracy to block the payment.

Although Sir David Hunt had indicated the reason upon which the British support for Nigeria was based, Stremlau had advanced a more cogent and fuller reason:

According to a summary report on Anglo-Nigerian relations that was filed with the federal Ministry of External Affairs by the Nigerian high commission in London toward the end of 1967: "Britain's shift to unequivocal support of Nigeria came suddenly when Nsukka fell and then, Bonny. During that time Nigeria received the full and official assurance from representatives of the foreign office in behalf of Her Majesty's government."  

There was no doubt that military situations far away in the mangrove swamp of Bonny and in the hilly jungles of Nsukka dictated the trend of ever-changing diplomatic activities in the corridors of ancient but action-packed 10 Downing Street and in the Whitehall. It was this

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31 Stremlau, op. cit. p. 76.
uncertainty of military situations and diplomatic shifts which helped to produce a series of mysteries which engulfed the payment of the promised "token money" to Biafrans.

Many questions have continuously been raised as to what actually happened to the token payment. Was the money paid? If yes, how much? If no, why was it not paid? Who prevented its payment? Many scholars have pried deeply into this issue. Since it is central to the hypothesis of this study, it must be explored further.

According to John de St. Jorre:

Stanley Gray had written a letter to Ojukwu, which was delivered on 1st July, promising him the money but stressing that he was acting under duress. The Biafrans originally asked that it should be paid into the Africa Continental Bank in London where they had their main U.K. account. However, they suddenly changed their minds, probably fearing an attempt by the Nigerians to recover it through legal action, and gave instructions for it to be paid into a numbered account in Geneva. The money never arrived. The Bank of England, presumably instructed by the Treasury (i.e. the British government), refused exchange control permission and the money was frozen. The Biafrans were furious and not the slightest bit mollified when Shell-BP showed them the Bank of England's letter rejecting their request. To them it looked like an elaborately hatched plot to take away what had been solemnly promised. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (as it now is) sheltered behind the transparent defence that it was "purely an exchange control matter" and had nothing to do with them. But there seems little doubt that the Federal "hawks" within the Commonwealth Office, and particularly the fast and furious reaction of Sir David Hunt in Lagos, had played a major part in blocking the payment.
The ultimate irony however, is that it was the Biafran's own decision to have the money paid in Switzerland that gave the British government time to ponder and act. If they had accepted the original sterling cheque they might have gotten away with it.\textsuperscript{32}

On his part, John Stremlau who came very close to the heart of Ojukwu in order to unearth the truth about the token fee wrote:

Ojukwu, however relishes his recollection of the browbeating late-night sessions with Shell-BP officials, during which he claims to have come close to extracting major concessions. In the end, he was promised a token payment of approximately two million dollars, which would have been equivalent to the amount of revenue earned during the seven weeks of Biafran secession, with the rest of the obligation to be held in escrow. Apparently, the payment was never actually made.\textsuperscript{33}

Stremlau believed that the most dramatic period of the confrontation was the meeting between Ojukwu and McFadzean, a senior official of the company who came from London merely to negotiate the release of Gray. He added,

Biafran leadership was split over what would amount to "reasonable" demands, and Ojukwu asserts that his tough talk was undermined by one of his senior advisers, who privately phoned McFadzean to assure him that compromise was possible.\textsuperscript{34}

Although there were so many speculations, the obvious thing is that Shell-BP did not make any payment to the Biafran authority. Even the most vigorous war correspondent of the \textit{London Sun}, during the war period, recalls that to

\textsuperscript{32}de St. Jorre, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{33}Stremlau, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 75. \textsuperscript{34}Ibid.
the best of his knowledge he did not see any evidence on either side or in London that the money was paid by Shell-BP. Ojukwu has similarly maintained that Shell-BP did not pay the money to Biafra. He noted, "Shell-BP did not pay royalties to Biafra, hence they were expelled and their assets confiscated pending such payment." The most plausible conclusion is that after all was said and done, Shell-BP made the promise, but did not pay the money because apparently it found it in the interest of both the company and its stockholders not to do so. However, the company was not obliged to make the payments particularly as the Biafran's claims to statehood were seriously being contested by Nigerian authorities.

The involvement of Shell-BP in the Nigerian civil war was not restricted only to the question of the payment of oil royalties. Since the company had most of its installations located in the Biafran territory with several million dollars involved, the company was inevitably vulnerable throughout the war. As pointed out earlier, the Biafran authorities had accused the company of providing the


lead for an amphibious invasion of Bonny by the Nigerian troops in July, 1967. The company denied it.

The fall of Bonny was followed by the fall of Port Harcourt on May 18, 1968. With this fall, the major Shell-BP installations in Biafra fell into the hands of federal troops. It is important to stress the point that because of the ill feelings already generated by the company's failure to pay the oil royalty to Biafra, and the accusation that it collaborated with the federal troops in the Bonny invasion, coupled with the relentless if not suicidal nature with which Port Harcourt was attacked and defended, major battles were concentrated at the company's various installations. As a result the company's installations suffered heavy destruction in the hands of the soldiers. In addition, the irate Biafran civilians vented their anger on the company's property.


39 Kirk-Green, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

40 Osuji, op. cit. The ill-feelings against Shell among civilians in Biafra were extremely high, particularly in Port Harcourt, the company's headquarters. Even some vehicles bearing the company's inscriptions were mobbed and stoned in streets. In addition, all well-known British interests in Biafra were targets of similar attacks. The famous and rich Kingsway Store along with "Biafra House," the headquarters of United Africa Company, Limited, and the administrative office of the Elder Dempster Limited, all British interests were set on fire. The Barclays Bank with headquarters in London was discriminated against as people in mass withdrew their savings from the bank if
The extent of damage and destruction suffered by the company was well stated by Stanley Webb, formerly, Head of Public Relations of the company at Port Harcourt. He has written:

Thirty years' work and one hundred and fifty million pounds were poured into developing oil in Nigeria. By June 1967 the Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company was exporting over 500,000 barrels a day. Then the war came. Installations were destroyed, a staff dispersed and production fell to zero... A more detailed engineering survey was made. It revealed that the main manifold through which oil entered the terminal had been destroyed, two large storage tanks destroyed and others damaged, the electricity generating plant and main pumping station heavily damaged by fire and made unstable, and the electronic control system put out of action.

The most conspicuous feature of the horizon was a high pall of black smoke from the direction of Bomu, one of the company's largest oilfields, which lies 25 miles northeast of Port Harcourt. The main office block, a large three-story steel and concrete structure completed in 1961, was inhabited only by two wild dogs. The building appeared to have been sprayed with oil and fired several times over, inside were the charred remains of what had once been a computer. The work shops were substantially intact, although stripped of machinery and other equipment.\(^{41}\)

In addition, the huge and complex oil refinery at Alesa Eleme was set ablaze when it became clear that the federal troops were very close. Although Biafran authorities accused the Nigerian Air Force of setting the

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\(^{41}\) Stanley Webb, "Then The War Came," *Shell Magazine*, 49 (February, 1969), 31-33.
refinery ablaze, it appeared that the attitude of the Biafran troops was to destroy all the Shell-BP's installations if they could not defend them. It was, however, useless to think of defending these installations since it was clear to everyone (or at least everyone was made to understand) that Shell-BP had collaborated with Nigeria, and had refused to pay the oil royalties to the rightful people of Biafra.  

The company was anxious to resume oil production once Port Harcourt had fallen and Biafran troops pushed back to a comfortable distance. After expensive and speedy repairs to their installations, Shell-BP quickly resumed production of oil. Once more oil began to flow as early as October, 1968. As noted by West Africa, Shell-BP has resumed production in war-damaged areas of Nigeria. Production of the new crude oil began at the end of October, between July and September Shell-BP exported some 200,000 tons from their terminal in Bonny, stored there and undamaged since oil production ceased in early July, 1967. Shell-BP has installed temporary facilities at Bonny to circumvent a sabotaged pumping station. An increase in production beyond 200,000 barrels per day will apparently depend on the installation of a new

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43 As Biafrans were retreating, they carried away the company's heavy machinery, particularly those that were used in production of locally made bombs, shore-batteries, and rockets.
pumping station and restoration of the full pipeline capacity.\textsuperscript{44}

As expected, the war brought a reduction in both oil production and export in the country, and this obviously affected the Nigerian economy. Her capacity to carry on the war, strongly depended on the foreign exchange to be realized from oil production.

As Table X shows, the annual oil production for 1966, when the crisis started, was very high. It surpassed the 1965 figure by almost 75 per cent. Thus, 1966 was a peak year in the annals of petroleum industry in Nigeria, but once the shooting war started, preceded by its concomittants, oil production began to go down. Federal blockade, civilian hostilities, military actions, and a state of emergency combined to produce a sudden drop in the oil production, and since it has been shown that Shell-BP was producing about 55 per cent of the country's crude oil, it was not difficult to comprehend what effect the company's inability to operate would have on the country's total oil production.

A drop of about 25 per cent in the production occurred between 1966 and 1967. In addition, there was a further reduction in the total production in 1968 which was the hardest hit. A drop from 116,553,292 in 1967

\textsuperscript{44}West Africa, December 7, 1968, p. 1447.
TABLE X

ANNUAL PRODUCTION SUMMARY 1958-1969*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Oil Barrels</th>
<th>Oil Tons</th>
<th>Gas Production MCF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>152,428,168</td>
<td>20,598,401</td>
<td>102,659,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>116,553,292</td>
<td>15,750,445</td>
<td>93,025,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>51,907,304</td>
<td>7,014,500</td>
<td>51,628,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>197,204,486</td>
<td>26,649,255</td>
<td>145,713,524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>518,093,250</td>
<td>60,012,601</td>
<td>393,027,179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


down to 51,907,304 representing about 55.5 per cent obviously threatened Nigeria's entire economy. This would have cost the country the war if production was not restored in 1969. The breathing year was 1969 when production went up 263 per cent from the last year's figure. Similarly, as could be seen in Table XI, export figures were consistent with production figures. This was understandable. 45

Thus, Shell-BP's speedy repairs of their installations and quick resumption of production as early as 1968 must have been encouraged by the federal government. Obviously,

TABLE XI
CRUDE OIL EXPORTS 1958-1969*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Approximate Value (£m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Barrels</td>
<td>Long Ton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>139,549,969</td>
<td>17,950,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>109,274,902</td>
<td>14,570,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>52,129,855</td>
<td>7,028,092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>197,245,641</td>
<td>26,554,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>498,200,367</td>
<td>66,104,208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Nigeria's ability to continue the war depended heavily on the oil money. It is not, therefore, unreasonable to believe that the company was greatly inspired by this necessity. The company responded accordingly.

The Unwilling Transnational Actor

The entire oil industry enjoyed a relative calm throughout 1968 after the early bickering over the payment of royalties. Once the Biafran troops were pushed back to a comfortable distance from oil wells in Port Harcourt and riverine areas, production resumed. This atmosphere of calm was shattered in June, 1969. In an unexpected raid, Biafran soldiers penetrated deep into Kale in the
Midwest and attacked oil men working for the AGIP oil company.\textsuperscript{46} The oil company was Italian. Oddly enough, Italy was the headquarters of the Caritas and the Vatican which had supported the Biafran cause with money and relief.

In the attack, which was carefully planned and obviously directed against oil companies, eleven workers of the company—all foreigners—were killed, and another eighteen men were taken prisoners.\textsuperscript{47} The eighteen oil men taken prisoners were subsequently tried in Biafra. They were found guilty and sentenced to death immediately.

In a well-worded statement released by Markpress, Biafra's Overseas Press Service, the Biafran government declared:

\begin{quote}
The eighteen oilmen—14 Italians, 3 Germans and 1 Lebanese—captured by Biafran forces in the Republic of Benin\textsuperscript{48} and sentenced to death by a special tribunal, were found guilty on two counts, ... The two charges on which they were found guilty were that they assisted Nigeria in war against Biafra, and that they helped Nigeria in preparing for war against Biafra, out of eleven counts which were brought against them.\textsuperscript{49}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{46} Daily Times (Lagos), June 3, 1969, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{47} de St. Jorre, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 343.
\textsuperscript{48} When Biafrans captured the Mid-Western Region in August, 1967, they renamed the region Republic of Benin, although they lost it within two months.
\textsuperscript{49} Markpress, \textit{Press Release} No. 638 (Geneva), June 3, 1969.
The killing of the eleven oilmen, the sentencing to death of another eighteen, and the chance that they would eventually be executed sparked off a network of international reactions. Friends of Biafra appealed for the release of the men. Pope Paul, who had shown great compassion for the Biafran cause, sent an appeal. The Presidents of those countries which had recognized Biafra—Gabon, Tanzania, Zambia, and the Ivory Coast—all sent words asking for their release. The Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant, and many international figures appealed to the Biafran authorities to spare the lives of the oilmen. Indeed, comparable international activities to that of the oil royalty issue in 1967 ensued.50

On the other hand, Biafran detractors capitalized on the issue to damage her international standing. Nigerian authorities called the attack "an evidence of atrocities being committed by the rebels."51 The Nigerian press called the action "a rebellious action" while an Italian daily paper compared the sentencing to death of the men with the verdicts of Nazi courts. Still another paper

warned that if the men were executed it would put Biafra outside the pale of civilized society.\textsuperscript{52}

To all these, Biafra remained defiant and threatened to execute the men as soon as Ojukwu sanctioned their execution. Tension mounted and massive diplomatic activities were engaged to save the men. Rumors about the demand of ransom by the Biafran authorities became rampant. According to the \textit{Daily Times}, "The Nigerian rebels are known to be asking for one million American dollars in ransom for the 18 oilmen sentenced to death by Ojukwu and his gang."\textsuperscript{53}

Biafra's reaction to the international outcry over the killing of the eleven oil men and the death sentence passed on eighteen others was one of disdain and incredulity. A Biafran radio commentator reflected the view prevalent in Biafra then:

\begin{quote}
World conscience is now at work--bitter attack on the international outcry over the death of 11 oilmen. . . . where was the outcry over the programs western information media, notably the BBC, treated the matter as if the victims were cattles . . . only a queue of numbers 1,000 or 50,000. The world's conscience must be right dead to conive the Nigerian genocide which so far had claimed over 1 million men. 1 million men are fit for the grave, merely because they are
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{African Confidential}, June 6, 1969, pp. 1-2.

black while the 29 white men are not because they are white.\textsuperscript{54}

After intensive negotiations and appeals, Biafran authorities decided to release the men. It was believed that ENI, the parent company of the AGIP oil company paid a ransom of sixteen million dollars to secure the release of the men.\textsuperscript{55} The most consistent rumor then in Biafra was that the amount was twenty million dollars in addition to two fighter planes and other military equipment and a promise of recognition by the Italian government.\textsuperscript{56} Other figures had been mentioned at various quarters.

Although the exact amount paid was never confirmed by any of the parties involved, one thing is certain. It was impossible to believe that Biafran authorities would have released the men without extracting a substantial sum from their employers. Therefore, something was paid, but the figure remains a mystery. However, "regardless of the amount, the damage that the incident did to Biafra's moral authority appears to have been considerable."\textsuperscript{57}

According to Stremlau, "Nigeria's ambassador to Rome said that the oil-men dispute 'broke Ojukwu's back in Italy.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{54} Radio Biafra, \textit{Newstalk}, June 3, 1969.
\item \textsuperscript{55} \textit{Daily Times}, June 9, 1969.
\item \textsuperscript{56} Osuji, \textit{op. cit.}
\item \textsuperscript{57} \textit{Financial Times}, June 21, 1969.
\end{itemize}
an assessment confirmed by Italian diplomats and reviews of the Italian press. There was also a paradox evident here. The oil company was of Italian interest. Italy was the headquarters of the Vatican and Caritas which had showed great interest and contributed substantially to the Biafran cause. The implicit effect of this issue was obvious.

Conclusion

Thus far this chapter has been devoted to stating the facts which surrounded the different actions of these two oil companies in the Nigerian civil war. The remaining part of this chapter will be devoted to what could be called "equating actions with facts." That is, it will be necessary to see how the facts and actions of the two transnational actors affected the civil war. A prelude to this is a restatement of the investigative hypotheses of this study:

1. That the two oil companies contributed to the outbreak of the civil war;

2. That they attempted to influence the behavior of the parties in the conflict;

3. That they prolonged the war; and

58 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 333.
4. That they served as instruments of conflict resolution in this war.

As already stated, the entire investment of Shell-BP was located in the Eastern Region—the area that was declared Biafra. The increased importance of oil was becoming internationally recognized in 1967. It was a common belief in Biafra then that the Nigerians were fighting them because of the oil in their territory. The Biafran slogan depicted this clearly: "They want your money and not your prosperity, fight them to a finish."\(^{59}\) Nigerians replied by saying that if the Biafrans had not gotten the oil, they would not have seceded, and that they were fighting Biafrans to keep Nigeria united. Their own war slogan seemed very appropriate except for the error in the syntax: "to keep Nigeria one is a task that must be done."\(^{60}\)

Out of this, two important facts emerge. One, Biafrans must have weighed the long-term effect of the

\(^{59}\) Osuji, op. cit. During the period both in Biafra and in Nigeria economic implications of the war dominated people's view of the war more than any other thing. Although earlier in the war religious aspects of it were regularly discussed, later on as the war progressed this diminished almost completely from people's minds.

\(^{60}\) Ibid. Both the Nigerian and Biafran war slogans were repeated on their radio network several times each day before every news broadcast and at the end of it.
oil revenue in their territory before declaring the secession. Two, if they had not had the oil in such a commercial and profitable quantity, there is no doubt that they probably would not have undertaken the act of secession. This point is reinforced by the fact that the territory of Biafra when viewed in terms of Nigeria's overall economy meant nothing if the oil was removed. Certainly, the Biafran authorities must have calculated all the pluses and minuses of the oil implications before the secession. Therefore, by implication, the oil was a dominant factor in influencing the Biafrans to start the secession. It was an important factor for the Nigerians to fight Biafrans for a reunion.

This does not answer the first hypothetical question, and this must, therefore, be explored further. Through a series of internal diplomatic maneuvers going on before the declaration of secession when the authority of Nigerian government was not in doubt, the company should have made it clear to the Biafran authorities of the company's unwillingness to take side in the conflict. They did not do so. Apparently, this silence must have been misconstrued by the Biafran authorities to mean that the company was eventually going to support them anyway. Secondly, Shell-BP, in an apparent decision to keep quiet, did not tell the Nigerian side of their
willingness to withhold the royalty until the conflict was resolved. Like the Biafran authorities, the federal government must have been deceived by this silence. Thus by maintaining silence of no-support to any of the warring parties, Shell-BP succeeded in giving each party false hope. This false hope was enough to gear them into an outbreak of the civil war. Although as a transnational organization, Shell-BP was not bound to tell each party anything. After all, as one Shell-BP high official aptly put it, "We don't do business by telling people, particularly politicians, scholars, and students how we do it." However, since a formal pronouncement from the company earlier in May or June, 1967, must have given the parties enough leverage to reconsider their possible options, the company's failure to do so, amounted to encouraging the outbreak of civil war.

On their part, the AGIP oil company was not involved in the early politics of "oil royalty" and could not have contributed to the outbreak of the civil war, but their presence in the Mid-west was perhaps one of the obvious factors that encouraged Biafrans to invade the region in August, 1967. By this move, it is safe to believe that when making elaborate plans for secession, the Biafrans must

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61 When the author requested an interview with a high official of the company, he rejected the interview with the above statement.
have equally included on the drawing board the oil revenue that would accrue to them if they would capture the Mid-west. Although it is not enough to assert that the company influenced the outbreak of the civil war by their potential benefits to Biafrans it must have been one of the enticing factors. This they could not resist.

The most outstanding transnational action of Shell-BP which clearly gave an aura of inconsistency was the issue of the payment of the token fee and the oil royalty. According to various data presented in this chapter, evidence is strong to support the view that the company made the promise to Ojukwu. There is also evidence that Stanley Gray wrote a note promising to pay the money if only a token fee. Available data also support the view that the arrangement was completed for the money to be paid into Biafra's London account. However, it is clear that the British government blocked the payment. The question remains—was Shell-BP indeed willing to pay the money to the Biafran authority or was it buying time and taking shelter behind a diplomatic screen mounted by the British government?

Gray decided after he had been released that he wrote a letter under duress. If he indeed wrote the letter under duress, it was proper for him to repudiate its contents once he was out of Biafra. This meant that Shell-BP
was not willing to make any payment. The point that the British government blocked the payment is a mere extenuation. What the British government did was to reject the granting of the necessary foreign exchange permit for the transfer of the money and not for the payment. Shell-BP did not need permission to make the payment. If there was a dire necessity and willingness to make the payment, the company could have made the payment in either New York, Amsterdam, or Geneva. Although the company operates a substantial account in London, it had many avenues open to it if there was a determination to make the payment.

What some evidence yielded is that the company, under pressure of both parties and the British government, decided to play for time. As it turned out, time was in the company's favor. Military gains by the federal troops in Bonny and around Port Harcourt demonstrated to the company that federal victory was possible. With this in view, it was proper for the company to believe that Biafra could not defend her claimed territory. For one thing, the Biafran troops had been incapable of breaking the federal blockade. They had been unable to inflict a meaningful "injury" on the federal territory. From the time the war started the Biafrans had been on the defense.
It would be improper, therefore, for Shell-BP to support the losing side by making the payment.

Thus, the conclusion is that Shell-BP influenced the behavior of the Nigerian leadership in mounting the blockade because of the company's indication that it would make some payments to Ojukwu. Also, the company, by failing to pay Ojukwu the promised money, influenced the behavior of Ojukwu to arrest and detain Stanley Gray. The company further influenced the military behavior of the federal side because after it failed to pay Ojukwu, the federal government calculated that it could still get the money since it had not been paid any way. Clearly, this explained the reason why the federal major offensive was launched in Bonny, the important oil terminal of the company.

On the third question as to whether the two oil companies prolonged the war, it is not difficult to see how they did this. As the data show, once the federal troops captured Bonny and Port Harcourt, and pushed the Biafran troops away to a reasonable distance, Shell-BP quickly resumed production and subsequent shipment of oil. By this action, the company became once again an important foreign exchange earner for the Nigerian government. Although as Table X and XI show, oil
production and export fell to their lowest ebb in 1967 and 1968, the amount of money realized was enough to be significant to Nigeria in sustaining the war efforts. On their part, too, the AGIP oil company, through prospecting in the Mid-western Region which was also a disputed territory, contributed to the Nigerian war efforts.

Since every part of Nigeria was open for a military attack either by air, sea, or land, the companies should have, as a temporary measure, withdrawn from the country until the outcome of the war was conclusive. The implications of their continuing production in a country in a civil war was that they were contributing to the war effort and, therefore, were helping to prolong the war in Nigeria's favor. Furthermore, they exposed themselves (their employees) to military attacks. This made the attack on AGIP employees obvious.

The last of the hypothetical questions is "did the companies as transnational actors serve to resolve the conflict"? Yes, they did by implication. This is related to their contributing to the war efforts by producing oil for export. The implicit action of this was that they helped Nigeria to defeat Biafra—not that they helped to resolve the conflict peacefully. Although it may not sound right to assert that the oil companies
directly supported the war against Biafra, it was impossible to exonerate them in any way from indirect support. However, the point must be made that it seems that the oil companies as multinational corporations were in the business of making profit in the interest of the companies and their shareholders. Therefore, the assumption is that they patterned their behavior during the war to suit their business interest. Even, the conclusion arrived above must still be viewed as very provisional.

There is one impending aspect of this study which must be considered. That is, what are the implications of the oil companies' action in the light of theoretical perspectives of international relations? This part of the study should be considered in the final conclusion when both the theoretical explanation and a behavioral comparison of the transnational actors are examined and analyzed.
CHAPTER III

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS
AS A TRANSNATIONAL ACTOR

This chapter will examine the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the Nigerian civil war. In this examination, an analysis of the implication of these activities will be considered. The central purpose will be to test the hypotheses which were outlined earlier in this study. In the concluding chapter, a comprehensive theoretical perspective will be given regarding the implication of the activities.

In order to avoid misunderstanding, it will be necessary to state a few words about the Red Cross. There has been confusion even among scholars and students in International Relations about the structure, function, and organization of the Red Cross—international or local. In the past, scholars have not given much attention to the political aspect of the activities of the Red Cross. This has been unfortunate because politics is often an element in the activities of the Red Cross. Many scholars have shied away from examining the roles of the Red Cross in international politics because they regarded its central
activities as humanitarian which to some may be regarded
as too sacrosant. However, the trend is about to change.¹

The Red Cross Societies, League of Red Cross Societies,
the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the
International Red Cross are terms that are frequently
used—sometimes interchangeably and other times confusingly.
For proper understanding of the terms as they are used here,
some explanations must be made to differentiate one from
the other and to be sure of what each is, what it does, and
why it does it.

The Red Cross Societies are national chapters of
individual countries. There are the American, the Canadian,
the British, the Nigerian, the Tanzanian, and the French
Red Cross. There are currently well over 130 national
societies of the Red Cross. These national societies are
members of the League of Red Cross Societies. The League
of Red Cross Societies is the world federation of the
National Red Cross, Red Crescent, Red Lion, and Sun
Societies, which group approximately 168 million individual

¹See the following works which indicate recent interest
in the political aspect of humanitarianism. Norris Davis,
Civil Wars and the Politics of International Relief:
Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean (New York, 1973);
David P. Forsythe, Humanitarian Politics: The International
Committee of the Red Cross (Baltimore, 1977); S. A.
Libralrie, Face au Blocus: Histoire de l'intervention du
Comité international de la Croix-Rouge dans le conflit du
members in over 90 countries. It was founded May 5, 1919, to maintain in peace-time the impetus gained during World War I by National Red Cross Societies, to increase their strength, serve as their medium of liaison coordination and study, represent them at the international level, and protect their moral and material interests at all times.

Although the League maintains complete independence, it collaborates actively in the humanitarian fields with many international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly with the United Nations Organization and its related agencies such as the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees.

The main function of the League of Red Cross Societies will be fully understood in the words of the founder:

Would there not be some means during a period of peace and calm of forming relief Societies whose object would be to have the wounded cared for in time of war by enthusiastic volunteers, fully qualified for the task? Such societies could even render great service during epidemics or at times of disaster of flood and fire; the philanthropic motives underlying their vocation would bring them into action immediately.²

Out of this statement emerged the declaration of Red Cross Principles. These are humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. The principal function of the League of Red Cross Societies is humanitarianism rendered with

impartiality irrespective of nationality or ethnicity. The Red Cross struggles to maintain neutrality because this guarantees it access into nations. It does not depend on any government or organization for support. To maintain this independence, most of its services are voluntary with a unity of command throughout the entire world of the Red Cross.

The third important branch of the International Red Cross is the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The ICRC was founded in 1868 by some public-spirited Swiss citizens to promote the Geneva Convention. Installed in a traditionally neutral intermediary, it is headquartered in Geneva. In conflicts, it sees to it that war victims receive protection and assistance. It inspects camps of political prisoners and refugees. As a link between prisoners and their families and between civilians separated by war, the Central Tracing Agency in Geneva gathers and forwards information, conducts inquiries and makes correspondence possible. Its records relating to the Second World War are still in daily use in tracing missing persons, captivity certificates, etc.\footnote{International Committee of the Red Cross, The ICRC Today (Geneva, 1968), p. 11}. 

\[\text{\footnote{International Committee of the Red Cross, The ICRC Today (Geneva, 1968), p. 11}.}\]
Through its delegates, the ICRC endeavors to serve, work, and encourage. In doing this, the ICRC does not ask questions. That is, it does not ask why a particular war occurs, or why a particular political prisoner is detained. Rather it seeks ways to alleviate the victims' sufferings. It may be an overstatement, but is proper to say that the ICRC is the driving rod of the International Red Cross. Its international identity is its neutrality and impartiality.

Thus, the League, the National Societies, and the ICRC form the International Red Cross. Somehow it is a misnomer to speak of the International Red Cross without being specific, because there is no organization or institution called the International Red Cross per se. However, the coming together of the three arms of the Red Cross for deliberation is the International Conference of the Red Cross. It includes representatives of various governments that are parties to the Geneva Conventions.

This International Conference of the Red Cross meets every four years in principle. But it may meet from time to time to discuss important international issues that affect it—for example, when a disaster occurs or when there is a need for international coordination of the activities of all arms of the Red Cross.
It is necessary to emphasize the independence of these three bodies—National Societies, League of the Red Cross Societies, and the ICRC. Coordination is often undertaken between them, but each is purely independent. This will explain some of the reasons why in the heat of the Nigerian civil war, while the ICRC was flying in relief materials, other national societies were sending their contributions directly to both lines of the belligerence.

The Traditional Role

As already mentioned, the traditional role of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is to help the victims of armed conflict, that is, to see that the letter of the Geneva Convention is respected. It is because of its important position in the world of the Red Cross and the controversy which surrounded its operations in Nigeria during the civil war that this chapter of the study is concentrated on the activities of the ICRC. It must be mentioned that where necessary and applicable, the activities of any or all the arms of the International Red Cross should be mentioned.

Once the civil war broke out in Nigeria, it became clear that the ICRC had gotten a fresh assignment. It was coming out of the operation of helping war victims in
the Middle Eastern war of June, 1967. At first, the war in Nigeria was relatively unknown. It was another type of African trouble. Moreover, Yakubu Gowon had declared the war a "police action" against the rebels of the Eastern states. The initial assistance to the war victims was undertaken by the Nigerian Red Cross and Biafran Red Cross on the Nigerian and Biafran sides, respectively.

By the end of July, 1967, it became clear that the civilian population in war areas of Ogoja and Nsukka would need some urgent relief. For a while, it looked as if these local volunteers would cope with the problem. But suddenly, due to the rapid advance of the federal troops, which resulted in a sudden increase in war victims—soldiers and civilians, it became inevitable for the two sides to seek outside help.

The first national appeal on the Nigerian side for funds, relief materials, and volunteers was launched on November 13, 1967, by Sir Adetokunbo Ademola, the President of the Nigerian Red Cross Society. On the Biafran side, the appeals for voluntary support for the entire humanitarian effort were initially handled by the Rehabilitation

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Commission, established early in 1966 when victims of the pogrom in the North were airlifted back to the Eastern Region. The response in Biafra was identical to the same enthusiasm with which the war was being fought. People donated money, food items of various categories, clothing material, and the like. Volunteers were many. Personnel was more than enough. The medium of appeal was Radio Biafra which devoted two hours—from 2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. to the announcement of the names of those who had made contributions. This method spurred more and more people into giving. Suddenly, the entire area of Biafra was transformed into a society of philanthropy.  

As the tempo of the war increased, the magnitude of refugee problems increased. As the war escalated in the air, civilian victims became many. As more and more areas were affected, more and more people became affected. Clearly, it was beyond the capacity of both Nigerian and Biafran authorities and their volunteers to cope with.

Even though there was great response to appeals for donations in both Nigeria and in Biafra, with the very rapid advance of the federal troops in the whole of the southeastern areas of Biafra in the months of March and April, 1968, the problems of coping with the war victims

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became serious on both sides of the war. It was time to appeal to the world.

The appeal of the President of the Nigerian Red Cross Society was directed to the League of the Red Cross Societies for funds, materials, and personnel. The appeal received world-wide publicity, and for the first time the world was made aware of the increasing nature of relief problems in the civil war.

In response to the appeal, the Nordic Societies through the League of the Red Cross Societies sent donations of clothes, soap, first-aid kits, and medications valued at over $28,000. Donations came from various other sources as well. Soon it became obvious that problems which the war was about to create would not only be beyond the capacity of the local societies, but would also seriously strain the resources of the ICRC.

Intervention by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

At the time when the war broke out in July, 1967, the ICRC had a delegate General in West Africa. Thus, when both Gowon and Ojukwu made appeals to the ICRC for relief materials for the war victims, their appeal fell in good hands. Even before the war started, because of the

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previous violence which had the magnitude of a wholesale massacre, the ICRC delegate General had paid several visits to Nigeria. 

Either through direct eye-witness accounts of the delegates or from news reports, the savage nature of the war and the summary execution of prisoners were well-known to the ICRC. As a result of this, the ICRC issued a statement noting that there was fighting in Nigeria. The ICRC reminded all exercising authority and all combatants that the Geneva Conventions signed by all countries throughout the world made the following demands:

1. Combatants surrendering shall not be killed;
2. The wounded shall be respected and the necessary care given to them, whether they are friends or enemies;
3. Civilian populations shall be spared and they shall not be attacked nor harmed, irrespective of race, nationality, or tribe;
4. Members of the army medical service and of the Red Cross be respected and protected. These must themselves avoid all acts of war; and
5. The sign of the Red Cross on a white background and all those it protects must be considered invincible and sacred.

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Ending its statement, the ICRC affirmed that it "counts on the goodwill of each one of you to have these human rules always applied." With this statement, the ICRC formally entered the Nigerian civil war.

In the first six months of the war, relationships between the ICRC, the Nigerian government, and Biafran authorities were smooth. The ICRC quickly dispatched 30,000 Swiss francs worth of medical materials to the representatives of the Nigerian Red Cross in Lagos and Enugu in July, 1967. Following this shipment, the ICRC installed medical centers both in federally held territory and in the Biafran side as well. These centers were staffed with well-qualified medical men in tropical and nutritional disease.

In mid-November, 1967, an ICRC aircraft loaded with medical supplies was required by Lagos authorities to land in Lagos for inspection. It did and then it was allowed to continue to Port Harcourt in Biafra.

Throughout 1967, the ICRC operations in both Nigeria and Biafra passed without any major confrontation, disagreement, accusation, or criticisms. Three factors were responsible for this. First, Nigeria had hoped for a

\[9\text{Ibid.}\] \[10\text{Ibid.}\] \[11\text{Ibid.; Africa Report, 13 (March, 1968), 3, 35.}\]
quick victory which did not come. Second, the tempo of the war was stabilizing. Third, Biafran authorities expected an early peaceful settlement. Thus, time was not ripe for either party to find a scapegoat for its setbacks or lack of progress in the war. Moreover, starvation, malnutrition, and the deadly sickness of "kwashiokor" (a deadly malnutrition disease that was common in Biafra during the war) had not begun to take their toll.

It must be stressed that Gowon and his advisers were aware of the implications of allowing the ICRC to send in medical facilities to Biafra. Also, they knew the implication of refusing this as well. They did not like the idea, but for the meantime, they acquiesced. They allowed the ICRC operations to continue on both sides of the fighting lines.

As mentioned in Chapter II, before the war broke out, the federal military government had blockaded Biafra. Ships were no longer allowed to enter the territory. It was expected that they could have equally not allowed the ICRC flights to enter into Biafra. The fact that they did demonstrated the fact that an early victory was expected and not that they were being very magnanimous.

With ever-increasing numbers of refugees as a result of the intensification of both artillery and air raid
bombardments on both sides, it became necessary for the operations of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to be systematized. In response to this need, the ICRC entrusted direction and coordination to a Commissioner General, August Lindt, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and one-time delegate of the ICRC.¹²

At the invitation of the Council of Europe, Assistant Director of the ICRC, P. Gullard, went to Strasburg in order to describe the ICRC activities in the conflicts to the members of the Council. Following various discussions with officials of the ICRC, the Council of Europe on September 24, adopted a resolution calling on member nations to support the ICRC war efforts in the Nigerian-Biafran conflict.

Earlier in the year, the ICRC had obtained the approval of both Biafran and Nigerian authorities for a world-wide appeal by the ICRC on the behalf of the two parties. In mid-July, the cordial relationship between the ICRC and the federal military government became sour.

¹²Because of his previous experience as a United Nations Refugee Commissioner, August Lindt probably knew and understood refugee problems. His adoption of a policy of aggressive "humanitarianism" which in effect meant putting political and diplomatic debates aside and supplying relief materials to the victims must have been as a result of previous experience.
For one thing, the expected sudden victory over Biafra had remained elusive, and it was certainly not in sight. The federal troops had thrown everything in their command, men and materials. Biafran troops had resisted with unusual tenacity. The Biafran population had enthusiastically supported the fighting troops. Clearly, it was going to be a long war, at least more than "a police action." Therefore, the federal military government had begun to view the sending of relief materials to Biafra by the ICRC as not in the interest of the government of Nigeria and its people. The federal military government was aware of the international status of the Red Cross. An outright attack on the ICRC would damage the federal military government overseas and would have the effect of strengthening Biafran propaganda. On the other hand, to allow the continuation of the aid flights into Biafra was unacceptable, too. Apparently, the federal military government decided on gradual restrictive steps against the ICRC.

The federal military government did not like references being made to the "rebel regime of Ojukwu" by the ICRC as "Biafra." This might seem frivolous, but in such a war in which every little thing had a significant meaning, each side was readily to exploit any slight opportunity.
From every activity of the ICRC, it was clear that it was determined to perform its humanitarian functions on both sides and to go to any length in realizing this objective. One such act was noted in Kampala. The Commonwealth Secretary General, Arnold Smith had succeeded in arranging a peace conference between Biafra and Nigeria. The ICRC issued an appeal to the two parties and dispatched a delegate to meet with the two parties in Kampala.

In a statement, the ICRC president said:

Now that important negotiations are starting in Kampala between the representatives of Nigeria and the secessionist Biafra region with a view to the cessation of hostility, the International Committee of the Red Cross which, since the beginning of the conflict, has attempted to alleviate the suffering of prisoners and the civilian population, addresses a most pressing appeal to the two parties in conflict so that a number of urgent humanitarian measures be adopted. Anxious to strengthen its work of relief, the International Committee of the Red Cross requests the negotiators in Kampala to consider the immediate adoption of the following three proposals:

1. Basing itself on the fundamental humanitarian principles and the spirit of the Geneva Conventions, the International Committee of the Red Cross requests the belligerents to take all the necessary measures, in particular by giving very precise and strict instructions to the armed forces opposed to each other, with a view to sparing the civilian population from air attacks or from other acts against their safety, whether they are or are not in the form of reprisals. Wounded or shipwrecked military personnel as well as prisoners are equally to be protected.
The International Committee of the Red Cross is prepared to give its support to all practical measures for the strengthening of the security of the civilian population.

2. The International Committee of the Red Cross stressed urgent appeal in its address in mid-April to Red Cross Societies throughout the world and to all aid organizations, urgent action is required to assist and supply civilian populations, suffering as a result of the hostilities.

Thanks to the help it has already received, the International Committee of the Red Cross is taking measures for medicines and foods, of which there is urgent need, to reach without delay all the areas affected by the war. So far as Biafra is concerned, however, facilities must be accorded the International Committee of the Red Cross by the two parties opposing each other to enable transports which will be organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross to arrive rapidly and safely.

It therefore urges that, in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the Geneva Conventions, every facility be granted it and that the blockade be lifted to enable the passage of relief supplies.

3. An exchange of prisoners held on either side could very shortly take place under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, on neighboring neutral territory. According to custom, the International Committee of the Red Cross would willingly undertake to organize such an exchange, with the help of the armed forces of the two parties in conflict.\textsuperscript{13}

In order to press these points and to secure agreement from both parties, the ICRC delegate General for Africa went to Kampala. There he met with both Nigerian and Biafran delegations in order to secure agreement with the

\textsuperscript{13}International Review of the Red Cross (Geneva, 1968), p. 295.
parties to the conflict which might contribute to the success of the humanitarian efforts proposed by the ICRC.

Suddenly, and in a most dramatic manner also, Port Harcourt, the most strategic, significant, and hotly contested city in the Biafran hands fell to the advancing federal troops. With this fall, refugee problems assumed almost appalling dimension. Although the city fell on May 18, 1968, it was nearly two weeks before the impact was felt. As its nearly half a million population fled the city (most of them Ibos), pregnant women, the sick, children, and the old fell by the waysides, dying, panting, or exhausted. Consequently, the sixty-mile road to Owerri was littered with bodies of fleeing dead refugees. In fact, federal troops had deliberately left one major route of escape open for the population of Port Harcourt. However, many incensed local villagers showed their anger on the escaping Ibos along the Owerri road. This wanton killing definitely increased the number of dead whose bodies were scattered all over the road.

Apparently one of the delegates of the ICRC must have reported seeing these bodies. The ICRC wrote:

As a result of the capture of Port Harcourt, the ICRC has just received a dramatic radio appeal from its delegation in Biafra. In this appeal it is stated that thousands of women, children, parents and children, infants and the aged, have been killed, wounded, and left to perish without help.

14 Osuji, op. cit.
and old people, starving, and on the verge of exhaustion are moving towards the centre of the territory, fleeing combat zones. The number of these refugees is at present estimated at about six hundred thousand persons crowded into several hundred camps and schools. These persons are terrified by the war and refuse to go back to their villages for fear of losing their lives. Already ICRC delegates have reported that they have seen many dead on the roadsides. To save these hundreds of thousands of human beings it would be necessary to dispatch a minimum of 200 tons of foodstuffs a day. The means at present available to the ICRC are totally inadequate to face this situation, and the Committee is ready to organize a large-scale relief operation. For the purpose it must obtain the necessary foodstuffs, means of transport (airplanes and then ships), and first and foremost the lifting of this blockade.

With this object in view the ICRC has just sent to the representatives of Nigeria and Biafra... a pressing appeal to lift the blockade now enforced against Biafra, to enable the Committee to send food and medicines exclusively intended for civilian population.\(^1\)

Clearly, the call for the removal of the blockade angered the federal military government. This marked the beginning of a series of clashes that were to follow in the thirty-month war. Perhaps, it marked for the first time when both sides in the war accused the ICRC of taking sides.

Kirk-Greene properly stated the situation when he wrote:

> It was about this time that the International Red Cross Committee had the first of its brushes

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\(^1\) *International Review*, June, 1968, p. 299.
with the Federal Government—clashes that were to increase in scale and tempo and spill over to all the humanitarian agencies, as they willy-nilly found themselves becoming so involved in the politics of starvation over the ensuing months, that by late 1969 there developed from the protracted procedural wranglings a sub-war in its own right.\textsuperscript{16}

It was a sub-war indeed because from now on, the question of relief problems in the Biafran territory assumed international recognition. With this assumption, the Biafran "nation" became known to the entire world, not as a nation in arms with another nation, but as an enclave facing genocide through arms and starvation. In a word, Biafra became synonymous with hunger, disease, and starvation.

Relief Supplies Without Policy

At this time, it appeared that the federal military government had not formulated a comprehensive policy on the relief issue. While it was protesting against the ICRC call for the removal of the blockade, Gowon was granting interviews with their delegate, Jean-Rend Pierre. In the course of the interview, Gowon promised that practical facilities would be granted the ICRC for the free passage of its relief consignments.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{16}Kirk-Geene, Crisis and Conflict, Vol. 2, 46.

\textsuperscript{17}International Review, June, 1968, pp. 299-301.
There is one obvious explanation for this attitude. The federal military government was then composed of "hawks" and "doves." Gowon, the head of the government, was clearly not a weak dove but a kind one, but he was surrounded by powerful "hawks" whose quest for punitive measures against Ibos was great. Gowon, however, was in a precarious position. He did not want to offend international opinion, but he did not want to alienate his rivals in the Supreme Military Council. Thus, the result of all these, as expected, was inconsistent policy in every phase of the crisis, particularly on the relief issue.

The federal military government decided to tighten up on relief materials going into Biafra, at least for one moment. In July, 1968, it ordered the Air Force "to search and destroy" any plane violating Nigerian airspace.\(^{18}\)

Meanwhile, the ICRC was making elaborate arrangements for massive relief supplies in both Nigerian and Biafran territories. By May, 1968, its appeal to national societies had begun to yield substantial results. Donations and contributions began to pour in from all over the world to support the relief efforts of the ICRC in Nigeria and Biafra.\(^{19}\)


All over the enclave were new refugee camps and feeding centers. In many instances the refugees were well received and cared for by the local inhabitants. However, there were evidences of some hostile attitudes toward them in some areas, particularly to those from the minority areas.\(^\text{20}\)

In some cases movement for some groups of refugees was frequent. For example, a group of refugees from the minority area who left Port Harcourt when it fell moved six times within two months before the group was finally camped at Ogbor-Ihitteafoukwu. As the refugees moved constantly according to the progress of the war, they continued to lose their family members, friends, and in-laws. If one takes into account the network of the extended family system prevalent in Nigeria, one would then understand how large each refugee group would be.\(^\text{21}\)

By July 1, 1968, there was no doubt that the most alarming situation was to be found inside the enclave in the hands of the Biafran forces. The refugee aspect of the war with its attendant problems was becoming more vivid in all parts of Biafra. Populations withdrawn from territory conquered by troops of the federal military

\(^{20}\)Innocent Ezeh, Former Rehabilitation Officer, Interview, Aba, August 1, 1978.

\(^{21}\)Paul Nwankwo, Former Relief Worker, Interview, Owerri, January 10, 1979.
government had quadrupled the number in the towns and villages in which they had sought refuge. In the absence of official figures, it was estimated that there were about 4,500,000 displaced persons, of whom 600,000 were being sheltered in improvised reception centers in which rations distributed by the authorities were insufficient to meet needs. Victims living in Biafran territory at this time occupied by Nigerian forces were estimated to number between 700,000 and 1,000,000. These were those who were tired of running or those who were caught by surprise. 22

In order to improve transportation of food materials, particularly in Biafra where roads and bridges had started to show signs of war because fleeing troops continued to destroy or damage them, the ICRC dispatched Robert Hitz, a specialist in transport problems, to Lagos to coordinate relief action on the federal side, in close cooperation with the Nigerian Red Cross. On the Biafran side, a similar arrangement was made, but utilizing local experts in many instances.

Arrangements were urgently made by the ICRC with a view to increasing the effectiveness of its medical teams

22 Ibid.

23 International Review, August, 1968, p. 396.
on both sides. Teams were formed and supervised by specialists in food nutrition, disaster, or violent injuries.24

Altogether, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had seventy-five people in the field. This was insufficient to ensure full cooperation and distribution of the relief supplies being sent in by them daily. In order to increase the personnel, the ICRC on July 20, 1968, launched an appeal for staff, specialists in transport, drivers, mechanics, radio operators, technicians, doctors, surgeons, anesthetists, pharmacists, and nurses. Within a few days, the ICRC Geneva headquarters was flooded with offers from all over the world.

As more and more refugees continued to flee their areas as fighting continued, the ICRC was expanding in quick response to the increasing problems. Anxious to continue its humanitarian work, they sought a way to increase their flights into Biafran territory. Federal approval for increased flights was needed and to achieve this objective, August Lindt, now in total control of the Nigerian-Biafran relief operations, went to Lagos to discuss the matter with Gowon. Out of this friendly negotiation, the federal government continued to acquiesce in night flights into the enclave.

24Ibid.
In Biafra, H. Jaggi, Chief Delegate of the ICRC in Biafra, concluded an agreement with the Biafran authorities bearing on the neutralization of the landing strip at Obilago, which would be placed under control of the ICRC and exclusively reserved for the routing of civilian relief. However, the federal military government refused to accept the suggestion from the Red Cross asking it to take cognizance of the neutralizing of this runway and authorize the aircraft of the Red Cross to carry out regular day flights there. The federal military government let it be known that it could not give its agreement to that operation. An impasse was coming.

All along the federal military government had hoped that by the end of 1968 the war would have been over. It had maintained at least a passive relationship with the ICRC in the hope that once the war was over, the ICRC would undertake a major role in the rehabilitation program. The federal military government's hope for a quick victory had not been achieved. Gradually but very steadily, the federal military government's frustrations were growing. Consequently, the influence of the "hawkish" elements in the federal government was equally growing while that of the "doves" was in the decline. Moreover, for the officials of the ICRC to continue to deal with the Biafran authorities
continued to anger the federal military government. On their side, the Biafran authorities had continued to accuse the ICRC of not doing enough—for being hoodwinked by the federal authorities.

By September, 1968, the ICRC received tremendous support from the governments of Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. Support also came from Swiss and other National Red Cross Societies.\(^{25}\) As a result of these gestures, the ICRC had available at Santa Isabel six aircraft; five DC6 planes and one C-130 Hercules. It was then a question of seeing how to use them. The ICRC believed that the best procedure would be that of the day flight. As a matter of urgency, the ICRC was allowed by the federal military government to transport relief from Fernando Poo to the airfield at Uli by means of day flights for a period of ten days beginning on September 5, 1968.\(^{26}\)

Unfortunately, fearing some military implications of day flights if implemented, the Biafran authorities made it clear that it would not be possible for them to allow flights by day to Uli, for fear that the federal forces

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\(^{25}\) John Foley, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Washington, May 4, 1979.

might draw some military advantage from them. Instead, they offered possibilities of another airfield, that of Obilagu.  

At this time it appeared that agreement between Nigeria and Biafra under the auspices of the ICRC was impossible. The ICRC decided to continue from then on its night flights to both the landing ground at Uli and at Obilagu at least until Obilagu, for military reasons, was handed over to the Biafran authorities. Shortly afterward, Obilagu fell into the hands of the federal forces.

Surprisingly, the Biafran authorities were not helping the ICRC. Their stubbornness and obduracy stared the ICRC clearly in the face. The ICRC could not back off from the territory for fear of losing world support because most of the donations were coming solely in aid of Biafran war victims. The ICRC indeed made the best of a bad situation.

Believing that no matter what happened it could still operate, the ICRC convened a conference of national societies interested in the relief action on behalf of the

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28 Statement by Robert Martin, Assistant Director of International Affairs, American Red Cross, Washington, April 11, 1979.
victims of the conflict in Geneva between November 4 and 5, 1968.\textsuperscript{29} As a result of this conference, the ICRC drew up a gigantic program for the relief operations in the two territories at war. This called for the spending of about 53 million Swiss francs in the next six months of 1969, assuming a static situation.\textsuperscript{30}

In a report to the conference, the ICRC wrote:

Being unable to meet the needs of all the famished population, the ICRC has concentrated on relief for children, expectant and nursing mothers. The 400 ICRC distribution centres have been supplying 700,000 women and children under 12 with dried fish, powdered milk and food for children. . . . The supply of other food requirements is becoming increasingly necessary. Rice . . . will therefore be included in forthcoming consignments.

Relief supplies have so far been shipped to Lagos. Negotiations are underway to obtain permission to unload at Port Harcourt, which will reduce handling expenses.\textsuperscript{31}

In a way, the ICRC emphasized the need for more flights into Biafra with federal government permission. They stressed the need for increased personnel on both sides of

\textsuperscript{29}International Review, January, 1969, pp. 3-20.

\textsuperscript{30}International Committee of the Red Cross, Documentation Presented to the Interested Societies in the Relief Action on Behalf of the Victims of the Conflict in Nigeria (Geneva), November, 1968.

\textsuperscript{31}Ibid. (The need for increased supply of rice is understandable. Rice is the most popular staple food in Nigeria among all classes of people. Although a large amount of rice is produced in Nigeria, a large quantity is imported every year to augment local productions.)
of the fighting lines.\textsuperscript{32} Table XII gives the number of personnel by Red Cross organizations as of December, 1968.

Although Lagos had so far tolerated the ICRC flights into Biafra, there seemed to be increasing signs of disenchantment among the federal military government over the issue. Consequently, as a first step in severing the connection with the ICRC, the federal military government planned to deny the ICRC any support for future appeals for funds on behalf of it and Biafra.

In order to secure such a support, the ICRC senior official, R. Gallopin, on October 15, 1968, wrote to Gowon:

If as I do hope the federal military government is prepared to encourage further action of the International Committee of the Red Cross in this direction, the ICRC could eventually arrange informal meetings of Representatives of Interested Governments or of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and possibly also of United Nations Relief Organizations at its Headquarters in Geneva. Appeals may also be made by letters or cables to Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for the purpose of recruiting qualified personnel which I hope should be made available also by various African Societies.

It is of course to be understood that the extent of the assistance to be given by the ICRC in the future as in the past will be entirely depending on the donations in kind and cash to be received from prospective donors.

... Such is the line of action which the ICRC is contemplating and I would be glad if you

\textsuperscript{32}Ibid. This did not include personnel serving under other humanitarian organizations.
TABLE XII
STATEMENT OF PERSONNEL BY ORGANIZATION
AS OF DECEMBER, 1968*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
<th>Biafra</th>
<th>St. Isabel</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss Red Cross</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Red Cross</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish Red Cross</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Red Cross</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav Red Cross</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish Red Cross</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Red Cross</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish Red Cross</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Red Cross</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Red Cross (Federal)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Red Cross</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>139</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From International Committee of the Red Cross
Documentation Presented to the Interested Societies in
the Relief Action on behalf of the Victims of the
could let me know before my departure on Saturday next that it meets with the support of your government.33

Although the letter stressed the need for the federal military government's support of the ICRC, it was not expected that if the federal military government refused to give such support that the ICRC would have abandoned the entire relief operation. Certainly by dealing with Biafran authorities, a de facto recognition of those in control in Biafra was obvious. Therefore, it would be possible for the ICRC to launch an appeal on behalf of the victims of the Nigerian civil war "on the Biafran side."

If Gallopin was expecting a positive and polite reply from Gowon, he must have been partially disappointed when he received a polite letter but with a negative answer, as Gowon wrote:

... As you know, the Federal Military Government has always been very appreciative of the assistance sincerely given to it by humanitarian organizations including the ICRC, and would continue to welcome such assistance.

On the question of fund, I am sure you will agree with me that it will be wrong for the Federal Government to be directly associated with appeal to individual governments and non-governmental sources for assistance. I consider that an appeal by you would be sufficient since the various governments and voluntary organizations are appreciative of the work you have

been doing in this country and elsewhere. If the ICRC wants to continue its role in Nigeria, I will, as I promised, put no obstacle in its way.

As you may know already, individual governments and organizations are dealing directly with the Federal Government through its Rehabilitation Commission, bringing in relief supplies and assistance in money, material and manpower.

I accept that the extent of the assistance given by the ICRC in future will depend on the donations, in cash and kind, to be received from prospective donors. Therefore I would advise that such assistance as the ICRC may wish to give Nigeria should follow the line of action discussed between the ICRC and the Nigerian Red Cross about the eventual taking over of responsibility by the latter. As you are aware, except for the small area still in rebel hands, the whole of the East Central State is now under the control of the Federal Government. The national relief organizations including the Nigerian Red Cross are now extending their operations over the entire area. We envisage the collapse of the rebellion very soon, and in view of the fact that the ICRC operations usually end with the termination of hostilities, you may wish to offer whatever advice or help you can within the means at your disposal.

The Federal Military Government fully appreciates and is most grateful for the valuable contribution of the ICRC to relief work in the war affected area. . . . Please accept the assurance of our highest considerations and esteem.34

To the ICRC officials, Gowon's letter had an ominous undertone. In the first place the claim that the federal military government expected the collapse of the rebellion was not acceptable to the ICRC. The rebellion did not fall for another two years. Second, the entrusting of

34 Letter from General Yakubu Gowon to R. Gallopin of the ICRC (Lagos), October 18, 1968.
relief operations to Nigerian National Rehabilitation Commission amounted to no relief at all. After all, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials must have reasoned among themselves, that relief assistance and rehabilitation are two different things. The first goes on in a war; the latter takes the place of the former at the end of a war. Viewed in its true perspective, ICRC continued to plan for a major relief operation and went ahead to organize the anticipated conference for a world-wide appeal.

Before the end of year (1968), a new problem was to be raised. The government of Equatorial Guinea, which became independent on October 12, 1968, ordered the ICRC to interrupt its airlift from Santa Isabel from the night December 21-22. However, intervention by August Lindt immediately enabled flights to be resumed for a period of two weeks.35

This was the state of affairs at the end of December, 1968. From all indications, 1969 was bound to be one of open confrontations. Increased flights and relief materials to Biafra were in the federal military government's thinking sustaining the rebellion. The determination

of the ICRC to carry on under obvious difficulties apparently baffled the federal military government.

For example, in the end-of-the-year report, the ICRC noted, "In spite of all these difficulties, the ICRC continued and strengthened" its disposition, built up stock which on the eve of the mounting of the operations reached a total of 3,000 tons of food and medicine. From September 3 to December 21, 1968, 6,404 tons of relief materials were thus dispatched to Biafra by means of 675 air flights.\textsuperscript{36} By the end of the year, the number of Biafrans in need of food aid was estimated at about 3.5 million.\textsuperscript{37}

\textbf{Federal Military Government Becomes Tough on the International Committee of the Red Cross}

The year 1969 was the most eventful year in the history of the ICRC as for humanitarian operations in the Nigerian-Biafra war. It was not accidental. The year 1968 ended without a resolution of the question of illicit flights to Biafra by the ICRC and other humanitarian organizations. So far, the federal military government had tolerated this operation but had indicated it would not continue to do so longer.

\textsuperscript{36}Robert Martin, \textit{op. cit.}

On the other hand, the ICRC officials had demonstrated tremendous diplomatic ability in dealing with both sides in the delicate matter. They were equally determined to continue to pursue a policy of aggressive humanitarianism. It was clear that both the federal military government and the ICRC were bound to clash headlong. It was a matter of time. In fact, it will be fair to say that each had tolerated the other up to this point.

In January, 1969, the ICRC published a report showing the number of personnel and materials that were available on the Nigerian side previously held by Biafra. (See Table XIII.) In addition to the number of personnel, lorries, land rovers, and various equipment located on the Nigerian side, the ICRC between December 20, 1968, and January 3, 1969, distributed 2,079 tons of food. These were made up of carbohydrates, proteins, and various other food items and for the same period a total of 915,652 persons were fed.

On the medical front, the ICRC medical teams treated 2,506 malnutrition cases as inpatients and 7,835 outpatients of the same cases. In addition, a total of 26,132 other cases were treated for the same period. All these amounted to 36,473 patients treated.  

TABLE XIII

DISTRIBUTION OF MEN AND MATERIALS IN NIGERIA ACCORDING TO SECTORS*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Uyo</th>
<th>Enugu</th>
<th>Port Harcourt</th>
<th>Asaba</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African personnel</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-African personnel</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorries</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land rovers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other equipment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From information note to National Societies on International Committee of the Red Cross Relief Action on Behalf of the Victims of the Conflict in Nigeria.

On the Biafran side, due to difficulties with the government of Equatorial Guinea, the transport of the ICRC relief from Santa Isabel to Biafra ceased on January 13, 1969. The Red Cross "reaffirmed its decision to use every possible means to continue its relief action to all victims of the conflict on both sides of the front." 39 In order to achieve this objective, the ICRC pressed on with its negotiations with the Santa Isabel government for a resumption of flights into Biafra. Once it was unable to achieve any agreement with Santa Isabel it abandoned its negotiation and finally succeeded in

39Ibid.
winning agreement with the government of Dahomey. On January 28, 1969, that government gave permission for flights from Cotonou.

In order to demonstrate to its previous and potential donors of its fairness in the relief operation, the ICRC published a report showing comparative figures of its flights and amount of foods sent into Biafra. (See Table XIV.)

TABLE XIV
TOTAL FLIGHTS AND TONNAGE CONVEYED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS TO BIAFRA, APRIL, 1968 TO JANUARY, 1969*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Flights</th>
<th>Tons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 8 to September 2, 1968</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>398.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>1,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1,841.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2,048.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1 to 13, 1969</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>304.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>748</td>
<td>7,108.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It must be mentioned that because of the cessation of flights as a result of the hostile attitude from the Santa Isabel government, food distributions in Biafra had to be temporarily discontinued during that period. Otherwise, the above figures would have gone up higher. On the medical front, work continued normally because there were some piled stocks already in Biafra. This enabled the doctors of the ICRC teams to be able to vaccinate about 120,320 children by January 20, 1969.

The figures shown in Tables XIII and XIV were released by the ICRC for two main reasons: (1) to impress its donors of the efforts of the Committee to help all the victims of the war irrespective of which side of the line they were on, and (2) to prove to the doubting Nigerians that its work was purely humanitarian and that it was not taking sides with either of the conflicting parties. Determination, decision, humanitarianism, and neutrality were clearly the stand of the ICRC officials.

From the beginning of 1969, the ICRC drew up a new relief program with the following objectives:

1. To increase food rations to persons already in receipt of ICRC assistance;
2. To intensity medical and surgical aid;
3. To increase distributions so as to reach a greater number of people on both sides of the front without any discrimination.

In order to renew its appeal and, of course, to give account of its stewardship to its donors, the ICRC convened another conference of the National Red Cross Societies, governmental and non-governmental voluntary associations, and the permanent representatives of donor countries' diplomatic missions in Geneva on February 17 through 21, 1969.

During the conference, the ICRC submitted to the delegates its new program. In the course of these various meetings in Geneva, the ICRC gathered a number of useful suggestions concerning the definitive form to be assumed by the plan, which anticipated a total expenditure of nearly 321,450,000 Swiss Francs, of which 84,000,000 were to be borne by the ICRC.\(^{40}\)

In order to raise more money for the new program, Jacques Freymond, ICRC Vice President, made an appeal on world-wide television and radio to governments, asking for the requisite funds to be made available so that the ICRC could pursue its relief operations in Nigeria and Biafra.\(^{41}\)


\(^{41}\) Ibid.
Following the appeal, the world responded with greater donations. Response from governments, Red Cross Societies, and other national and international institutions was unprecedented. For example, thirteen governments donated a total of 28,361,158.10 Swiss francs. Topping the list was the United States government with a donation of 15,552,000. Also thirty-two National Red Cross Societies donated about 32,000,000, while other organizations contributed 36,000,000. The magnitude of the contributions, in fact, represented a clear-cut mandate.\(^{42}\)

With this amount of money in its possession, the ICRC did not foresee financial difficulties, but a more important problem soon emerged. This was a logistics problem. In January, 1969, the government of Equatorial Guinea finally decided to forbid the ICRC to transport fuel by air from Santa Isabel to Biafra. This fuel was essential for generators producing electricity in the ICRC hospital and for the seventy lorries belonging to the ICRC which were engaged in carrying food and medicines from the airport, the terminal of the airlift to distribution points in the interior of Biafra.\(^ {43}\) The result of

\(^{42}\)ICRC, Annual Report, 1969, p. 11.

this action was to paralyze the entire network of humanitarian relief efforts. As a result of these increased difficulties, August Lindt decided on January 6, 1969, to suspend flights for the moment.\textsuperscript{44} In order to break this deadlock, the ICRC made a considerable number of representations, determined that everything should be done for the continuation of its action on both sides.

In view of the obvious difficulties which the ICRC was facing, it was compelled to issue a strong statement in late January:

\begin{quote}
The International Committee of the Red Cross' sole objective, in acceptable conditions within the meaning of the Geneva Conventions, is to be able to act on behalf of all the victims of the conflict in accordance with its own strict traditions of neutrality.\textsuperscript{45}
\end{quote}

After succeeding in winning agreement from the Dahomean government to use Cotonou for airlifts of relief materials into Biafra, the ICRC felt comfortable—at least at present. But its determination to find a workable solution to the problem of daylight flights continued to dominate the thought of ICRC Chief August Lindt.

In pursuit of this objective, Lindt went to Biafra in March, 1969, to discuss the matter with Biafran authorities. Apparently, he did not get any meaningful results from a meeting with Ojukwu. The Biafran authorities

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{45}\textit{Ibid.}
had stubbornly rejected any daylight flights to Uli because night flights had given them a lot of advantages. This point will be elaborated upon later on in this chapter.

However, through the diplomatic ingenuity of Lindt and his unflinching resolution not to allow the humanitarian operations in Biafra to falter, he succeeded in winning another agreement from the Equatorial Guinea government. Thus, flights into Biafra from Santa Isabel resumed in February. Therefore, with flights originating from both Cotonou and Santa Isabel, the ICRC relief materials were pouring into Biafra in large quantities.

Meanwhile, the federal military government had watched all these developments with increasing displeasure. Evidently the influence of the "hawkish" elements in the federal military government was on the ascendancy. It was clear that the federal military government would not tolerate the ICRC aggressive humanitarianism further. Several factors were responsible for this.

Although the federal military government had in the first instance invited the ICRC to participate in the humanitarian relief operation in Nigeria, it appeared that the ICRC had overstepped its bounds by sending in large quantities of relief materials to Biafra. The ICRC had, at least in the federal military government's viewpoint, been inept in dealing with Ojukwu regarding the question
of daylight flights which would have given federal forces
some military advantages. Rather the ICRC had continued
to find ways of sending in relief materials despite
Ojukwu's intransigency.

It was clear to the federal military government that
the ICRC's dealing with Ojukwu and referring to the
rebel enclave as Biafra had encouraged Ojukwu and his
colleagues greatly. It may have given Ojukwu a false hope
of eventual recognition by those traditional donors to the
ICRC.

Despite Gowon's letter of October 18, 1968, asking
the ICRC not to associate the federal military government
with its further appeals for funds, the ICRC had gone
ahead to send out appeals to the world on behalf of the
"victims of the Nigerian civil war." The securing of both
Cotonou and Santa Isabel airfields for relief operations
into Biafra by the ICRC meant that more and more food and
medical facilities would be shipped in greater quantity
than before. The implication of this would be to strengthen
the Biafrans so that they could continue to fight federal
forces.

The consequence of the ICRC's "aggressive
humanitarian" policy in Biafra was to solidify Ojukwu's
obduracy, give him false hope, strengthen the Biafrans,
and thus prolong the war. In fact, from all indications,
there was at this time a stalemate on the war fronts. The federal military government was actively looking for a scapegoat. The ICRC was a ready victim.

There was also a related factor to all these. The federal government from the onset of the war had expected quick victory. They had committed a large number of men and many materials to the war. They had accordingly won a lot of important victories; they had captured territories—most of them very strategic ones—and in fact, inflicted heavy military injuries on the Biafran army. Yet, the Biafrans had continued to resist very tenaciously. Their spirits had remained very high. Even in some cases, they had inflicted heavy losses, too, and had won important victories as well. Spectacularly, the Biafran forces had surrounded Owerri and were taking similar offensives in so many war fronts. In a word, they had stilled the hands of the federal forces.

Lagos had reasoned most plausibly that if this type of stalemate continued, the precarious position of Gowon would be in jeopardy. Consequently, the entire federal set-up might disintegrate and Biafran existence might become a reality. Thus, the federal military government was furious with frustration, dejection, and anger. It was, therefore, time to unleash these on the ICRC, whom
they believed had sustained the Biafran regime in the name of humanitarianism.

There were many reasons why Lagos chose the ICRC for a selective attack in order to frighten other humanitarian organizations. In the first place, the ICRC was the first to be involved in the war. It was the most vulnerable because as a non-governmental organization of a transnational nature, it is always conscious of the law, of its impartiality, neutrality, and international standing. The federal military government believed that it would be proper to deal more aggressively with the ICRC than the most turbulent and stubborn Christian organizations. The choice paid off but its side effects damaged the Nigerian image.

The federal military government instructed its air force to shoot down any plane disregarding the federal government's order. On the evening of June 5, 1969, while enroute to Biafra from Santa Isabel, a Swedish plane with Red Cross signs fully marked on it was shot down by a Nigerian Air Force plane piloted by a British mercenary. All the crew members of the plane died in the attack. Nigeria had sent an unmistakable message to all the relief organizations in general, but specifically to the ICRC.

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46Daily Times; West African Pilot; Morning Post, June 6, and 7, 1969.
Although many scholars have maintained that the choice of a Swedish plane was deliberate because of various attacks by the Biafran Air Force spearheaded by a Swedish pilot, Von Rosen, it must be pointed out that it could have equally been a Canadian or American plane in the service of the ICRC. What was more important (and apparently paramount in the minds of Nigerian authorities) was that the plane was that of the ICRC.

Following this incident, events quickened as Nigeria tightened up against the ICRC. In explaining the incident of June 5, the federal government in an apparent move to damage the ICRC's international reputation accused the pilot of the plane of carrying arms "because many villagers had heard several explosions of ammunitions and bombshells." The *Daily Times* reported that the ICRC had given its pilots orders to defy Nigeria's order and to fly in the dark with relief materials or to fly in materials when there was adequate cloud cover.

To drive its point home, the federal military government gave the ICRC officials operating relief activities at


48 Osuji, *op. cit*.

the Ikeja Airport seventy-two hours quit order to leave Nigeria, accusing them of spying on the Nigerian government without saying for whom they were spying. In a related move, the federal military government declared August Lindt persona non grata on June 14, 1969. Giving reason for this action, Okoi Arkipo, Nigeria's Commissioner for External Affairs declared:

1. Lindt had lied to the Lagos Airport authorities in order to fly to Cotonou, Dahomey when all flights by small planes were banned.

2. He had told the Dahomean authorities that the federal government had agreed to Red Cross flights from Cotonou when he had not approached the Nigerian government on the subject. This had threatened to damage the good relations between Nigeria and her neighbour.

3. That he did not put any pressure on the rebel regime to permit daylight flights by aid planes which would have prevented gun-running operations to the rebels.

In an unrelated incident, the federal military government, at the same time deported a West African correspondent of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Peter Stewart, after he was detained for more than twelve hours. These three incidents—the shooting down of the ICRC plane, the deportation of both Lindt and Stewart—generated

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50Daily Times (Lagos), June 8, 1969, p. 1.

international protest against Nigeria. Both the American and Swedish governments came out openly and deplored the attack on the Red Cross plane.52

The first reaction of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), despite the Nigerian press reports, was to suspend all flights on June 6, "until an Icelandic plane in ICRC service flew two missions to Biafra from Cotonou, on the night of June 10-11, with 25 tons of foodstuffs. The airlift then ceased operating."53

Refuting the accusation against Lindt, the ICRC, in a statement issued in Geneva on June 14, said:

The unilateral exclusion decreed against Dr. Lindt by the federal government can but provoke profound surprise and deep regret within the ICRC and amongst all those who, so selflessly serve so as to assist the civilian populations, victims of the conflict now raging in Nigeria.

Any government is of course, free to maintain relations with any party they choose and the International Committee will continue to respect, today as it has done in the past, the sovereign rights of states.

The International Committee of the Red Cross, whose teams in the field pursue their daily task unremittingly, trust that the tensions engendered by this tragic conflict may diminish so that the innocent victims, who are the sole

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object of their concern, may continue to receive assistance.\textsuperscript{54}

Meanwhile at least if only temporarily, the Nigerian government's aim was achieved as ICRC planes had ceased to fly in with relief materials. Although other humanitarian organizations did not stop flying into Biafra as a result of the incident, for a few days in Biafra relief planes did not come in. The sky was relatively quiet.

Surprisingly on June 19, 1969, August Lindt wrote to Marcel Naville, ICRC President, submitting his resignation. In a carefully worded letter, Lindt wrote:

\ldots From the beginning I was aware of the difficulties to be overcome in order to maintain a relationship of confidence with each of the parties in conflict, exacerbated by the bitterness present in all civil wars. I have always endeavoured to draw public attention--directed too much, in my opinion, towards Biafra--to the suffering among the population on the Nigerian side of the front. It was not assistance to governments which was required, but to victims wherever they were and whatever their ethnic origin.

My determination to remain objective was not always appreciated in this conflict where propaganda and psychological warfare play an important part. Our work was therefore the butt of attack sometimes from one party, sometimes from the other, and even from both simultaneously. Nevertheless, co-operation with the civilian and military authorities was always possible and in spite of the many crises and obstacles, the work was supported by men of good will, whose

friendship, although not publicly displayed, I shall treasure. 55

Giving indication that the attack and exploits of Von Rosen must have played a part in Nigeria's bitter reaction leading to the shooting down of the ICRC plane, Lindt wrote:

When Count Von Rosen intervened, his exploits considerably changed the situation. First, a campaign was launched against me in the Nigerian government in a change of policy. These events resulted in the Nigerian Federal Government's decision to declare me persona non grata. I shall not dwell on the Nigerian Federal Government's accusations by which it tries to explain its decision. The work achieved is sufficient in itself to exculpate me.

I would however reply to one reproach. In private as in public I have said that the conflict should be resolved by peaceful means. I cannot consider this as a political attitude; it is merely a common sense. I have learned sufficiently to appreciate the negotiating genius of independent Africa to reach the belief that it is able to show the world an example of a pacific and humanitarian settlement of a conflict. 56

In conclusion, Lindt said:

If, therefore, after thorough reflection—for it is not easy to withdraw from an operation to which one has devoted all one's strength and energy, I request you, Mr. President, to consider my mandate as ICRC Commissioner General for West Africa as terminated. It is in the hope that my decision, which is irrevocable, will facilitate the continuation of this so essential ICRC programme. I am certain that the living forces


56 Ibid.
of the ICRC will overcome the difficulties which, as in the past, will arise in the future.\textsuperscript{57}

In accepting his resignation, the President, Naville observed:

... The work of ICRC during conflict is often misunderstood but, as you know, we have long been accustomed to unpopularity and groundless censure. Your noble personality remained unperturbed, and our confidence in you was thereby strengthened. As you think your withdrawal may permit the resumption of the humanitarian action, we wish to avail ourselves of this opportunity to assure you that we shall do our utmost best to continue the work which you directed, so that your shining contribution to the history of human solidarity shall not be left to tarnish.\textsuperscript{58}

The Lindt affair sparked off international reactions.\textsuperscript{59}

The press coverage of the incident did not help Nigeria's image at all. If the federal military government had expected to derive political benefit out of the incident, it had misfired. In comparison, the shooting of the Red Cross plane and the detaining and deportation of Lindt had done to Nigeria's international image what the killing and detaining of oilmen in the Mid-west had done to Biafran authorities. Both incidents were boomerangs. In a

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{58} A letter from Marcel Naville, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross to Dr. Lindt, International Committee of the Red Cross Commissioner General, for West Africa and a Co-ordinator for Nigerian war relief operations, Geneva, June 20, 1969.

war in which any amount of psychological warfare and propaganda was featuring very significantly, anything that touched off international opinion against either of the belligerents was bound to have a far-reaching effect.

Following Lindt's departure and resignation, there was some restructuring of operations of the ICRC in Nigeria. The ultimate authority for planning, finance, and administration of the Joint Relief Action was exercised by the ICRC headquarters in Geneva through its Head of Mission based in Lagos. In this way the operation in the federally-held areas was linked with that in the secessionist areas.

On June 30, the federal military government issued an elaborate statement explaining its new policy on relief operations in Nigeria:

The Federal Government of Nigeria has reviewed the relief and other activities of voluntary agencies operating in all parts of Nigeria and has decided that these should henceforth be properly supervised, effectively controlled and co-ordinated in the interest of national security and efficient operations, and in order to safeguard the genuine foreign relief agencies and their personnel working on both sides of the fighting lines.60

After spelling out reasons for its new policy, the federal military government said that the Federal

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Rehabilitation Commission should henceforth take over all types of relief operations in the country. Before any relief operations are permitted, "the federal government must satisfy itself that relief materials such as spare parts for radios, vehicles, aircraft and fuel for the use of the rebels" do not constitute a threat to the security of the country.61

The new Nigerian government's policy caused some confusion particularly with the Nigerian Red Cross Society which had worked hand-in-hand with the ICRC. In order to remove the confusion, the federal military government issued another statement clarifying its relationship with the Nigerian Red Cross. In the statement the government explained:

It has come to the notice of the federal government that the recent policy statement on relief supplies to displaced persons and other civilian victims of the civil war in federal areas has given the impression that the Nigerian Red Cross has been placed under the day-to-day control of the Federal Government through the National Commission on Rehabilitation.

... The Nigerian Red Cross is free to enter into mutual agreements with other voluntary organizations for the purpose of discharging its recognized functions. It will be offered facilities throughout the country at all Government levels since it is a national organization duly recognized as such by the Federal Government. The Federal Government will itself assist in

61 Ibid.
building up the national and international image of the Nigerian Red Cross.62

With this explanation and clarification by the federal military government, the Nigerian Red Cross entered into a meaningful negotiation with the ICRC, which culminated in a final agreement between the two parties for eventual takeover by the Nigerian Red Cross Society of all roles of coordinating, controlling, and distributing relief materials in Nigeria.63

With this agreement and takeover, the ICRC's role in the Nigeria relief operation assumed a passive stance. It still made money available to the Nigerian Red Cross for relief operations. Moreover, its role in the areas of medical assistance, helping prisoners of war, handling thousands of tracing cases, and reuniting families continued.

On the Biafran side, operations continued as much as difficulties could permit. A delegation of about 50 members was running 7 hospitals and 64 sickbays, including 3 leper clinics, with a total of about 150,000 sick and wounded.


63Agreement of September 30, 1969 Between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRC) on the Take-over by the Latter of the Relief Action to Civilian Victims of the Conflict (Lagos), September 20, 1969.
Most importantly, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) officials fully realized that what had triggered the chain of events which resulted in its final ejection from Nigeria was their inability to persuade Ojukwu to accept daylight flights into Biafra. From this time, with the aid of many interested parties, the ICRC intensified its negotiations with Nigerian and Biafran authorities in order to secure an agreement which would permit daylight flights which would mean more relief materials going into Biafra with less danger.64

The U.S. government played an important role in this instance. Although maintaining a neutral stand on the political issues of the conflict, the government spared no efforts in helping the humanitarian aspect of the war. Because the U.S. government contributed men, money, and materials through the ICRC in particular, the activities of the U.S. must be considered in the light of the impact it had on the behavior of the ICRC.

64 Interested parties included the United States, Britain, Canada, and the Hague Group of countries (West Germany, Norway, Sweden, etc.). Of these countries the United States government through the Special Coordinator, Clyde Ferguson, spear-headed intensive negotiations which nearly resulted in a meaningful agreement which would have permitted daylight flights into Biafra. Because the agreement did not have the approval of the two conflicting parties, it was never implemented. See State Department's Status Report, January, 1970.
The official policy of the U. S. was to provide relief to civilian victims on both sides of the conflict, regardless of political association or physical location. The official policy was clearly spelled out in February, 1969, when President Richard Nixon appointed Clyde Ferguson as the Special Coordinator for relief efforts in Nigeria. On that occasion the President said, "surely, it is within the conscience and ability of man to give effect to his humanitarianism without involving himself with the politics of disputes."65

At the beginning of the war, U. S. government assistance was minimal. The first assistance to the victims of the civil war from the U. S. began in 1967 with Catholic Relief Services when it supplied 187,800 pounds of food valued at $17,589 to the displaced people. As the tempo of the war quickened resulting in more and more civilian victims early in 1968, the U. S. government responded more meaningfully. On May 26, 1968, the U. S. officially declared a disaster in Nigeria and authorized use of Agency for International Development contingency funds for disaster relief. Subsequently, money was allocated to the ICRC to support its relief operation budget.

65 Statement of the President of the United States cited in State Department Status Report.
While most of the allocations to the ICRC by the U. S. government were to support general relief operations in Nigeria, some of the cash donations were specifically labeled for the purchase of large quantities of stockfish (a high protein product especially acceptable to Nigerians) and for measles and vaccine innoculations. The ICRC was given a free hand in utilizing those other funds from the U. S. government as it found expedient. The U. S. government continued occasional fund allocations to the ICRC throughout the war. Table XV shows the financial support contributed by the U. S. government during the period 1968-1969.

While continuing to make lump sums of money available to the ICRC, the U. S. Agency for International Development was undertaking separate and sometimes joint actions in relief operations as well. In the summer of 1968, for example, Edward Marks, a representative of the U. S. Agency for International Development and an ICRC convoy of landrovers and trucks with seven team members and medical supplies went from Lagos to several relief centers in Enugu, Nsukka, Ikom Uyo, Nwaniba, and other areas for relief services. It was during this spot assessment of the situation that a comprehensive report was compiled and sent to Washington.
TABLE XV

FINANCIAL SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS BY THE U. S. GOVERNMENT—1968-1969*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 12, 1968</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10, 1968</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1968</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February, 1969</td>
<td>620,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 1969</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April, 1969</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 1969</td>
<td>5,450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June, 1969</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,670,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This resulted in a trip made in August, 1968, by Ambassador C. Robert Moore, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, to Geneva for urgent consultations with officials of the ICRC. In the course of various meetings with both the ICRC officials and other government representatives and organizations who shared the U. S. government's concern over the starving victims throughout

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66 This does not include funds made available to various recognized humanitarian organizations. See Chapter IV. The total cash donation by the U. S. government was $65 million.
Nigeria, the concern of all in Geneva was to find an effective system for distributing foods and supplies to the victims in Nigeria and Biafra. Serious discussions were held regarding the possibility of daylight flights and a land corridor.67

In urgent response to a request by the ICRC, the U.S. government sent a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport expert to Geneva to advise on the feasibility of completing an airfield in Biafra to be used solely for delivery of food and medicines. In less than one month after it was completed and put into operation, it was captured by the federal troops.

In all aspects of the relief operation throughout 1968, the Agency for International Development Disaster Relief Coordinator's office took a major part. It sent out money, personnel to assist, and experts to advise. In all of these, its major partner was the ICRC.

The ever-increasing number of victims, the magnitude and severity of the civil war, and difficulty of the relief operations required the assignment of a specific full-time Agency for International Development staff to be responsible for the operations. During the months of November and December, the situation in Nigeria and Biafra changed

from short-term disaster emergency to long-term relief and rehabilitation. There was absolute need for a separate staff for the entire operation.

Responding to the need in war-torn Nigeria and Biafra and to the mood of the country, President Nixon acted. In February, 1969, President Nixon appointed C. Clyde Ferguson as Special Coordinator for Relief for Nigeria/Biafra with the rank of an Ambassador. The President gave him a special mandate to devote his full time to mobilizing humanitarian forces to break the relief impasse.

Working in every facet of the relief operation, Ambassador Ferguson and his staff specifically provided

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68 The appointment of Clyde Ferguson by President Richard Nixon was as a result of pressures put on the administration by various American leaders to do more for the victims of the civil war in Biafra. Before the appointment, two important Congressional teams had already visited Biafra and Nigeria—one was led by Honorable Charles Goodell and the other by Charles Diggs. For these pressures and other related Congressional actions, see the following: Statement by Honorable Ancher Nelsen, U. S. House of Representatives, Congressional Record, Ninetieth Congress, Second-Session, September 26, 1968, p. 8363; Senator Edward Kennedy, "Address Before the International League for the Rights of Man," December 6, 1968; Charles C. Diggs, Jr., Herbert J. Burke, Report of Special Fact-Finding Mission to Nigeria, February 7—20, 1969, Ninety-First Congress, First Session, March 12, 1969; Senator Charles Goodell, Report of the Biafra Study Mission, Ninety-First Congress, First Session, September 25, 1969; and Sub-committee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees of the Committee of the Judiciary, Hearings Part I, Ninety-First Congress, First Session, July 15, 1969.
guidance to the ICRC for upgrading the entire relief operation. They gave much needed support and leadership to the ICRC on an integrated logistical set-up, including a technical assistance plan and provision of landing craft for a possible river opening into Biafra.

Ambassador Ferguson initiated a comprehensive plan which would have allowed a simultaneous sea and land corridor through the Cross River into Biafra, and at the same time allow daylight flights into the Uli airstrip. These received wide acceptance among the traditional supporters of the relief efforts, notably the United Kingdom, Canadian, West German, and the Nordic and Scandinavian governments.

Ferguson worked relentlessly throughout the operations and urged the improvement of all relief programs to victims on both sides of the conflict. Ferguson made numerous trips to Nigeria, Biafra, Geneva, and to other countries in order to coordinate and stimulate adequate world-wide humanitarian response to the needs of the civil war victims.

Once the federal military government ejected the ICRC from Nigeria, attention focused on achieving a meaningful agreement between Nigeria and Biafra over the whys of land and sea corridors. Although a final agreement was not achieved, Ferguson and his staff with all other
members of the Hague group, including the United Kingdom, Canada, and West Germany, came very close to breaking the impasse on daylight flights. They secured Nigeria's agreement to the plan worked out by Ferguson, but in the end the Biafran authorities rejected it saying "the Biafran government refused to let the problems of provisioning prevail over the security of the Biafran people by authorizing day flights to its only air strip." 69

In its report after the Biafran rejection of the daylight flights agreement, the ICRC wrote:

On 14 August, 1969 the Biafran authorities gave their agreement to the principle of starting day flights as proposed by the ICRC. Three weeks later, on 4 September, the Nigerian Federal Military Government also agreed in principle. On September 13 it signed an agreement drawn up by it and the Committee.

The ICRC had given instructions for the airlift to be ready to take off from Cotonou without delay, but on 14 September, the negative stand adopted by the Biafran authorities compelled the ICRC to call a halt to the preparation in progress. The Biafran authorities considered the agreement on daylight flights, drawn up by their representatives and the ICRC incompatible with the agreement which the ICRC had signed with the federal military government.

The ICRC itself saw no incompatibility between these two bilateral agreements and on practical arrangements. It is therefore carrying on its negotiations in the hope that Biafra will accept the Red Cross plan. ICRC teams are standing by on the spot awaiting the resumption of flights. 70


Until the collapse of Biafra in January, 1970, the Biafran authorities never changed their minds, and, therefore, no more flights by the ICRC were ever resumed. After the war had ended, the Nigerian government never welcomed back any of the foreign humanitarian organizations—the ICRC or the churches.

Thus from May, 1969, it was clear that the federal government tightened up against all the humanitarian organizations, particularly the ICRC. In every facet of the relief operations, it demonstrated determination to paralyze them. Bombing of the Uli airstrip became a routine. Each night in the month of May more than sixteen air-raids would be reported. On each occasion, the Federal Air Force would change tactics—striking the runways with canon fire, and dropping heavy explosives after dropping search lights so as to bring all the targets to clear view. Despite all these, relief operations continued. If the federal military government was so determined to paralyze the relief operation, the ICRC and others were resolved to get in anything they could. In fact, it was a risky business for anyone who ventured near Uli. The relief agencies ventured and sacrificed their lives for it.

However, after resisting federal military government's pressures for nearly two years, the arrest and deportation
of August Lindt and the shooting down of the Red Cross plane apparently caused a change of policy in the ICRC. Perhaps the most dramatic was the resignation of Lindt. His departure meant an end to the policy of aggressive humanitarianism adopted by the ICRC. After his departure, Marcel Naville made a statement saying,

The ICRC noted the federal government's policy in regard to relief flights into the secessionist-held areas, and undertakes to examine ways and means of implementing it. In this connection, the ICRC President re-affirms that the ICRC will not penetrate into Nigerian airspace without the authority and consent of the federal government. The federal government, on its part, re-affirms its guarantee of the safety of the ICRC personnel in federal areas and the safety of the ICRC relief aircraft using agreed corridors. 70

As could be seen, this statement marked a shift from the previously followed policy of the ICRC since the war. However, it was not an admission by the ICRC that it had followed misguided policy by flying into Biafra relief materials at nights without federal government's written permission. They were adjusting to realities of the situation.

The Issue at Stake

The issue at stake among the three parties—Nigeria, Biafra, and the ICRC was a complex one with legal and

70 Ibid.
moral implications. As indicated earlier in this chapter, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regarded itself as the custodian of the war victims' welfare. This view is derived from the provisions of the Geneva Convention which the ICRC was the promoter. Part of that provision says:

Each High Contracting Party shall allow the free passage of all consignments of medical and hospital stores and objects necessary for religious worship intended only for civilians of another High Contracting Party, even if the latter is its adversary. It shall likewise permit the free passage of all consignments of essential foodstuffs, clothing, and tonics intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases.

The obligation of a High Contracting Party to allow the free passage of the consignments indicated in the preceding paragraph is subject to the conditions that this Party is satisfied that there are no serious reasons for fearing:

(a) that the consignments may be diverted from their destination
(b) that the control may not be effective, or
(c) that a definite advantage may accrue to the military efforts or economy of the enemy through the substitution of the above mentioned consignments for goods which would otherwise be provided or produced by the enemy or through the release of such material, services or facilities as would otherwise be required for the production of such goods.

The Power which allows the passage of the consignments indicated in the first paragraph of this Article may make such permission conditional on the distribution to persons benefitted, thereby being made under the local supervision of the Protecting Powers.

Such consignments shall be forwarded as rapidly as possible and the Power which permits their free passage shall have the right to
prescribe the technical arrangements under which such passage is allowed.71

The above provision has dual effects of creating a safeguard for the victims of armed conflicts and at the same time creating a loophole for incessant rejection. In effect, the provision is capable of dual interpretation. This was what happened in the Nigerian case.

From the Nigerian standpoint, the Geneva Conventions gave the federal military government the authority to inspect the flights because it was clear that a definite advantage was accruing to the Biafran regime. Nigerian authorities had all the evidence to believe that relief materials were being diverted to the Biafran armed forces. In short, the federal military government believed that it had a lot to fear over the relief materials going to the enclave.

In respect of the Convention, the federal military government argued that allowing the movement of consignments to the Biafran civilians in the first instance was an act of respect for the Geneva Convention. When it became evident to them that the privilege was being abused by the Biafran regime they changed their policy. From the standpoint of the ICRC, this was not the case. For example,

in a statement by Okoi Arikpo, the Nigerian Foreign Commissioner argued that it was within the authority of the federal government to reject any further flights into the enclave.\footnote{T. O. Elias, the Attorney General of the Federal Nigeria during the period has argued extensively on the legality of Nigeria's right under International Law to blockade the former Eastern Region. Although he did not accept entirely the de facto case of Biafra, other authorities supported this until Biafra was defeated completely. See T. O. Elias, "The Nigerian Crisis in International Law," Journal of International Law (Lagos), 1971; Hackworth's Digest of International Law, Vol. I, especially Chapter III on Recognition, pp. 133-170.}

In quick answer to this statement, the ICRC asserted:

The Nigerian authorities are quite right in saying that the State which allows the free passage has the right to prescribe the technical arrangements. However, this concluding clause in Article 23 should not be so construed as to vitiate the obvious general purpose of that article.

Article 23 confers on children under 15 years of age, expectant mothers, and maternity cases the right to receive the medical and hospital stores and food supplies necessary for their survival. This right to help commits States parties to the IVth Convention not only to grant free passage of relief consignments, but to do so as rapidly as possible.

Consequently, the final clause of Article 23 is not intended to prevent or delay the arrival of relief consignments. If it were, it would invalidate the whole humanitarian purpose of the article.\footnote{International Committee of the Red Cross, Press Release No. 122b (Geneva), August 22, 1969.}
Nigeria regarded the illicit flights into Biafra by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as a violation of the Nigerian air space and the breaking of the blockade in force against Biafra. This was demonstrated by the downing of the ICRC plane on June 6, 1969. The ICRC believed that although unwritten, there was an implicit agreement between it and the federal military government from two perspectives:

1. The ICRC was invited by the Nigerian Red Cross on the permission of the federal military government to undertake relief operations in the country on behalf of the civilian victims of the war in the country. Since the Nigerian government recognized Biafra as a part of the country, the ICRC invitation was not limited to only federally-held areas of the conflict.

2. The federal military government had in all respects acquiesced in the illicit flights. It could have stopped the ICRC flights promptly if it had determined to do so. But either due to inconsistent policy on the issue or due to inability to face the realities of the issue, Gowon and other federal government officials had given the world and the ICRC the impression that they were in agreement.
This point could be illustrated by the agreement of April-May, 1969, when through the diplomatic display of tact, wit, and ingenuity of Ferguson, an agreement was reached between the ICRC and the federal military government allowing the ICRC to fly relief materials into Biafra for sixty days. During the period of this agreement, the ICRC flew in 250 tons of food materials every night. According to John Foley, this stabilized the situation in Biafra, but weakened Biafra's willingness to accept daylight flights.\textsuperscript{74}

Probably this was the last concession made by the federal military government. It was after this that the ICRC's failure in persuading Ojukwu to accept daylight flights into Uli was finally exposed. The federal military government had no more reason to expect a change of attitude from the intransigent Colonel.

For all practical purposes, the ICRC operations into Biafra ended June 30, 1969, and any other assistance given to the Biafran victims of the war was of a negligible nature in comparison with the massive relief materials that continued to pour in every night by the church organizations.

\textsuperscript{74} John Foley, Former Deputy Assistant of State for African Affairs, Washington, May 4, 1979.
From Biafra's standpoint, the matter was simple. Ojukwu regarded the Biafran "nation" as a member of the comity of nations; that her people were entitled to receive relief materials from the ICRC. Probably, Ojukwu understood the dilemma of the ICRC, and he exploited it. He did not want to give the Uli airstrip for daylight flights, because this would, among other things, give the Nigerian Air Force planes a military advantage by trailing the relief flights to bomb it. It was surprising that even the ICRC was subjected to destructive criticism by the Biafran authorities themselves. Clearly, deep in Ojukwu's mind, he was sure that the ICRC had undertaken several risks on behalf of the Biafran "nation."

Perhaps knowledge of this had not changed Ojukwu's perception of the involvement of the ICRC when he wrote:

What I knew and maintained was that the ICRC was totally involved in progressing the Gowon war aims. Naturally, as a "humanitarian" organization, one would have to assume that this involvement was reluctant. There is no doubt in my mind that the ICRC colluded with interests that were not purely humanitarian and that the powers that influenced the organization, the United States of America was perhaps the most effective. 75

Table XVI gives the expenditure and income of relief action in Nigeria during 1969.

75 Letter from General C. Odumegwu-Ojukwu to author, June 1, 1979.
TABLE XVI
EXPENDITURE AND INCOME OF RELIEF ACTION IN NIGERIA, 1969*
(In Swiss Francs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
<th>Secessionist Area</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff salaries, travel expenses and allowances, all risk insurances</td>
<td>3,744,091</td>
<td>5,692,419</td>
<td>9,436,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local staff (locally-recruited labour)</td>
<td>1,701,582</td>
<td>428,525</td>
<td>2,130,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delegation overheads</td>
<td>1,364,191</td>
<td>1,200,164</td>
<td>2,564,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment and outlays for delegations</td>
<td>381,080</td>
<td>1,091,296</td>
<td>1,472,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment and outlays for transport and distribution of relief supplies</strong></td>
<td>3,423,117</td>
<td>5,496,271</td>
<td>8,919,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of transport and distribution</td>
<td>8,716,462</td>
<td>42,883,789</td>
<td>51,600,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC special expenses</td>
<td>1,269,601</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,269,601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of relief supplies (food and medical supplies)</td>
<td>11,180,969</td>
<td>10,675,483</td>
<td>21,856,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special actions (stockfish, vaccination programme, coasting vessels)</td>
<td>3,636,954</td>
<td>3,820,075</td>
<td>7,457,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35,418,047</td>
<td>71,288,022</td>
<td>106,706,069</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

On the basis of the position of each of the parties, it will be necessary at this point to restate the hypotheses of the study, so as to evaluate them in the light of the various evidence narrated above:

1. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) contributed to the outbreak of the conflict;
2. The ICRC attempted to influence the behavior of the parties;
3. The ICRC helped to prolong the war;
4. The ICRC served as an instrument of conflict resolution.

Each of these will be tested by means of evaluating the evidence so far presented.

The first hypothesis is completely not supported because it cannot be proven in any way that the ICRC directly or indirectly contributed to the outbreak of the war. If Ojukwu had calculated on the assistance of the ICRC before declaring his secession, this was not shown at all. However, if he had given a thought to this, it is doubtful that ICRC aid would have been a factor in his decision to secede.

As shown in Chapter II, there was obvious evidence that Ojukwu and Gowon had each calculated heavily on the oil royalties from the oil companies. This was not the
case with the ICRC. To all intents and purposes, the ICRC
did not contribute to the outbreak of the civil war.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the matter is clearly
different. The case against the ICRC in this instance
could be summarized as follows:

(i) It tried to influence Ojukwu to give up
its only life-line with the outside world, the Uli
airstrip. If Ojukwu had done this as consistently
urged by the ICRC, since the ICRC could not
guarantee that Federal Air Force should not
follow the planes into Uli and thereby knock
it out of use, Ojukwu was right in rejecting
this urging. The truth is that the ICRC
attempted to influence Ojukwu on this issue.

(ii) Another evidence of an attempt to
influence the behavior of the Biafran leadership
has already been indicated above. When an agreement
was reached between Lagos and the ICRC in April,
1969, for sixty day-night flights into Uli, both
Lagos and Geneva had hoped that the massive food
supplies flown in during this period would have
shown Ojukwu what good effect would be gained if
daylight flights are authorized by him. Instead,
according to John Foley, the effect of this was
to stabilize the starvation situation in Biafra.
This weakened Biafra's previous willingness to
accept daylight flights.

(iii) Although the ICRC Chief, August Lindt,
adopted an aggressive policy of humanitarianism,
the ICRC sometimes punctuated this with "a stop-
and-go" attitude. Their flights were not regular.
And for some filmey reasons they frequently
cancelled scheduled flights. These were efforts
directed to pressure Ojukwu and his lieutenants
into accepting the daylight flights. It must
have seemed incredible to the ICRC officials
that Ojukwu remained obdurate on this point.

(iv) On the Nigerian side there were several
attempts on the part of the ICRC to influence
Gowon and members of the federal military
government. There was obvious implicit influence
exercised over Lagos by the ICRC; hence Lagos was
unable to formulate a consistent policy to deal
with the ICRC. This implicit influence was in
the fact that Lagos was worried so much about
the international standing of the ICRC and the
amount of world-wide support it had demonstrated
by the magnitude of donations and contributions
being made to it during the conflict.

(v) Besides, there were some explicit
attempts to influence Gowon. For example, he
was persuaded to accept or at least to acquiesce
to night flights into Uli when this was clearly
a violation of Nigerian air-space.

(vi) The objectives of the ICRC in a series
of negotiations and meetings with the Nigerian
leadership was to influence it into accepting the
fact that Biafran war victims were entitled to
receive ICRC support of relief materials. This,
as already demonstrated, worried Lagos very much
and drove a clear-cut division between the hawks
and doves in the federal military government. In
effect it made Gowon look weak instead of kind. 76

On the third hypothesis that the ICRC helped to
prolong the war, a strong case can be made to support
this assumption. First, the ICRC was flying in highly
concentrated food materials and these were mostly valued
and scrambled for by Biafran civilians and soldiers.
Thousands of starving villagers and able-bodied soldiers
flooded the ICRC stores in Biafra every day. Storekeepers
and food distributors were helpless when soldiers brandished
the muzzles of their rifles and shotguns. Often soldiers
were given more food and better food items, and nobody
dared raise a word against this. As one ex-Biafran soldier
recalled, "I remember the type of corned beef which the
ICRC was distributing--it was reddish, salty, and

76 John Foley, op. cit.
nourishing. We always went for it whenever we charged the Red Cross stores."  

The most important food supplier for Biafra's military and civilian elites may have been the non-sectarian International Red Cross. In early August, 1968, the ICRC had only three expatriate officials to monitor the distribution of food distribution in Biafra. Even with more foreign workers to monitor the distribution of the food, the soldiers would not have been prevented from seizing the relief materials at will. The hungry soldiers wanted food for themselves. Those who were not hungry wanted the food for members of their family who otherwise could not get it. In each case the soldiers were desperate.

According to one relief worker:

The attacks on the lorries between the airport and our central store became more determined. At first, villagers and local people would try to jump on to the back of a moving lorry, put down the barrier, and throw something off onto the road. When we put the lorries into convoys, a log would be rolled across the road in front of the last one in order to cut it off from the rest. As the attacks became more subtle we tightened our security, until finally we came in March 1969, to an armed hold-up organized by the sort of black marketeers and deserters that every war produces. The Biafran Air Force responded with an armed escort and a week or so later one

77 Confidentiality requested.

78 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 250.
of the attackers had his leg shattered. After that the attacks ceased.\textsuperscript{79}

This was not an isolated case. The determination of the soldiers and civilians to grab relief materials was tenacious and resolute. For example, at the ICRC store in Ezinihitte, twenty miles west of Umuahia, a group of soldiers charged the store while civilians were unloading relief materials from Uli. There was an affray and scuffle between the storemen and the soldiers. In the end nearly half of the storemen were conscripted into the Biafran army on the spot. They later secured their release after making a good deal with the intruders by loading their jeeps with bags of salt, stockfish, and other food materials.\textsuperscript{80}

Besides direct forceful seizure of the ICRC food materials by both civilians and soldiers in Biafra, there were other avenues through which relief materials went to the Biafran civilian and military elites. Relief workers were paid not in cash but in kind—with sufficient, sometimes excessive, food materials. They turned around and sold these to those who could afford the high prices.


\textsuperscript{80}S. U. Okechukwu, Former Red Cross Worker, Interview, Umuahia, August 3, 1977.
tagged on them. Only military men and top civilian elites could afford those extraordinary prices.

Furthermore, pilfering, misrepresentations, nepotism, and unjustifiable favoritism, which was rampant in the enclave, were other sources through which food went into the wrong hands. This indeed helped to sustain the soldiers and those civilians who were actively supporting the war.

Financially, the ICRC spent a substantial amount of money in local food purchases such as garri, rice, beans, palm oil, and other items as firewood, vegetables used in sickbays and feeding centers. These were, in turn, paid to the Biafran authorities in foreign exchange. By this means the ICRC was indirectly contributing to the foreign exchange build-up of the Biafran authorities.

There were other means through which the ICRC helped the Biafran economy. Payment of rent for trucks, lorries, cars, and cyclists utilized in the relief distributions also helped. That is, every amount of money spent in Biafra by the ICRC must have been paid into the Biafran foreign exchange account.

More than anything else, the ICRC helped to prolong the war by giving the Biafrans a false hope. Many Biafrans believed that since the ICRC was supplying them with food materials from all over the world, a day would come when
the donors of these food items would come out in the open to support Biafra with military materials. With this hope, their morale continued to grow, and their resistance became a matter of massive suicide.

Finally, the fourth hypothesis—that the ICRC served as an instrument of conflict resolution—needs to be considered. Throughout the conflict, the ICRC gave out several statements emphasizing the need for a peaceful solution of the conflict. This was further demonstrated by the number of places visited by officials of the ICRC. At Kampala they were there; at Addis Ababa they were not missing; at Algiers they sent a delegation. In each case they were trying to promote a peaceful solution of the problem.

The encouragement given the belligerents to come to some sort of agreement over the relief flights, kept them very close to each other. The liaison responsibility taken by the ICRC officials clearly served to promote conflict resolution. The most striking evidence of promoting the resolution of this conflict has often been ignored by many scholars. The involvement of the ICRC in the war with all the attendant international diplomacy and propaganda that went with it aroused the attention of the world. Biafra's chief complaint against Nigeria was that her military aim was to carry out genocide against the people of Biafra.
Thus, the world was attentive to what was happening to Biafra then. With the ICRC and its several officials scattered all over Nigeria and with the bad publicity already earned by Nigeria through their tactless handling of Lindt's affair, the Nigerian government labored fast and hard to deter any wanton killing and destruction of lives in Biafra once that secession had collapsed. It could be argued that if the ICRC had not been involved in the way it did, Nigerian troops would have carried out a massive killing of both civilians and soldiers in the Biafran territory. Although there were some scattered cases of excessive reprisals, including the raping and abduction of Biafran women, the scale was low and could have been worse. Yet, there was no evidence of official support for these scattered incidents.

Of course, there were massive arrests of top military and civilian Biafrans by the federal forces at the end of the war, but not one person was put to trial or detained for an unreasonable time. The obvious assumption was that the ICRC focused the attention of the world on the Nigerian crisis. The world paid attention for a long time, too. Although the ICRC did not bring the belligerents to a conference table to discuss peace, its efforts to achieve agreement on relief materials spilled
over into Nigerian attitude in gracefully treating the "rebels."
CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCHES AS TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS

It is important to point out from the outset how difficult it will be to attempt to tie together all the multifarous humanitarian agencies, religious organizations, groups, and individuals that made substantial contributions to relief operations for the war victims in both Nigeria and Biafra.\(^1\) The reasons are multiple. Some of these organizations merely existed as war-time emergency organizations and became extinct immediately after the war. An example is the Joint Church Aid. Others had a network of subsidiaries attached to them which helped to raise funds and donations from various national and local auxiliaries such as the Caritas Internationalis and the World Council of Churches, while others were special interest groups based on national,

racial or ethnic configurations such as the Jewish Community in the United States and the Committee to Keep Biafra Alive in the United States. Thus, a comprehensive analytical framework based on a single or a few dimensional models will be inadequate for a proper and detailed empirical and normative analysis.

Because of the incomprehensive nature of the structural, functional, and motivational stance of these humanitarian organizations, an attempt will be made here only to analyze the activities of those religious humanitarian agencies, Catholics and Protestant, which later on formed the Joint Church Aid. It is important to post a warning here. By using the churches as a unit of analysis, many important organizations and agencies have been unfairly excluded. It is hoped that these will be examined in other future studies.

It must be stressed that in a war which produced a great deal of international awareness because of the publicity given to the carnage, starvation, hunger, diseases, and holocaust which the war produced, it was expected that many local and international interest groups and individuals would be involved, particularly in response to the need to serve and help people in the agony and grief of war.
As a point of entry, two factors which played important roles in stimulating international awareness and the involvements of these religious organizations must first be carefully examined. The first was the religious connection of the foreign missionaries and the people of the Eastern Region. The second factor was related to the first. This was the large amount of information which these missionaries frequently supplied during the war to their respective foreign bases often providing eye-witness accounts of the causes of the war, its course, and inevitable consequences of each possible outcome.

As indicated in Table V in the first chapter of this study, the Christian population in what was known as the

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For a more detailed discussion on the history of Christianity in Nigeria, see the following works: Christian Council of Nigeria, Building for Tomorrow: A Pictorial History of the Protestant Church in Nigeria (Ibadan Press, 1960); E. A. Ayandele, The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914 (New York, 1967); J. F. Ade Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-1891 (London, 1965). The Protestant Church was reported to have come to Nigeria in 1842 but in Eastern Nigeria in 1857 through the first African Bishop, Samuel Ajayi Crowther who was released as a slave in Sierra Leone. See E. Jefferson Murphy, History of African Civilization (New York, 1972), pp. 379-382. The Roman Catholic religion made its debut in Nigeria about 1846 but due to series of conflicts in Western Nigeria particularly in Abeokuta, it was not until 1885 that Catholicism came to Eastern Nigeria. The first foreign priest, Rev. Father Louis came to Onitsha to establish a church in 1896. But despite its late coming, the Catholic religion won more adherents than the Protestant church.
Peoples Republic of Biafra was 77.2 per cent, whereas other religions including Muslims and Animists totaled 22.8 per cent. However, since a large number of Easterners were Christians and Christianity had by 1867 made penetrating inroads into the heart of the region, it was certain that even those who regarded themselves as non-Christians constantly came under the influence of Christians who controlled the entire administrative, political, and social mechanism of the region. Thus when the Biafran propaganda machinery mounted a campaign to portray the war as a religious war, almost the entire population of Biafra identified itself with this fear. If there was any disenchantment with the secession, it came not as a result of religious differences. Rather it came as a result of minority fears of Ibo domination.³

In terms of areas and numbers, the Roman Catholic church had a majority of adherents in the entire Biafran nation. The heaviest concentration of this population was in the Onitsha, Ogoja, Enugu, and Owerri Provinces. There was a good number of adherents in the Ikoto-Ekpene, Calabar, and Port Harcourt areas. Overall, it is reasonable to estimate that the Catholic population in Eastern Nigeria before the war was about 45 per cent.

Correspondingly, there were the Owerri, Onitsha, Enugu, Ogoja, Ikot-Ekpene, Calabar, Port Harcourt, and Umuahia Dioceses of the Roman Catholic church. On the eve of the civil war each of these was under the indigenous Bishop. This was remarkable progress in the Roman Catholic chain of command which was noted for its conservatism in indigenization of the bishoprics. For example, three years before the war, most of the bishoprics were under the leadership of expatriate bishops. The Protestant churches (which included Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Qua Iboe) and other small minority churches had about 40 per cent of the population. In terms of areas the Anglicans were heavily concentrated in the Owerri, Onitsha, Enugu, and Calaban Provinces. In other areas such as the Ogoja, Calabar, and Port Harcourt provinces, they were evenly matched with members of other protestant sects such as Lutherans, Baptists, and Presbyterians. Before the war, all the Bishops of Protestant churches in Eastern Nigeria were indigenous bishops. For example, the three bishops occupying the Diocesan headquarters of the Anglican church before the war were all Ibos—Uzodike for Enugu, Nwankiti for Owerri, and Otugbele for Onitsha.

Because of their numerical strength and their slow process in elevating the indigenous priests to high positions, the Roman Catholics, therefore, had a large
number of foreign missionaries in Biafra on the eve of the secession. Most of these were church priests who did missionary works of evangelism and educational work of teaching and supervising schools and colleges belonging to the Roman Catholic authorities, and doing other services such as working in the Catholic hospitals, convents, and seminaries. For example, in such large Roman Catholic colleges as Christ the King College in Onitisha, Stella Maris College in Port Harcourt, the College of Immaculate Conception in Enugu, and Holy Ghost College in Owerri, about 75 per cent of the teaching staff were expatriate priests. Also in their seminaries at Enugu, Okpuala, and Ihiala about 80 per cent of the staff were also foreign priests. Similarly, in the Catholic large hospitals at Emekuku near Owerri, Uyo, and at Ihiala, about 85 per cent of the staff holding responsible positions were foreign priests and sisters.  

It is not surprising, therefore, that even at the end of the war several hundreds of them, predominantly members of the Holy Ghost Orders from Ireland, were still in the enclave. Stremlau carefully stated that point when he wrote:

"Those in predominantly Ibo areas, such as the Nsukka Enugu sectors, joined the march into...

\[4\] Osuji, Personal Diary."
the Ibo heartland. Historically, Iboland had been served primarily by one order: The Holy Ghost Fathers from Ireland. Not only were they the largest bloc of missionaries in Nigeria—three hundred men plus—another eighty Irish Holy Rosary Sisters—but, unlike other religious orders, the Holy Ghost Fathers were all on one side of the battle line.

On the other hand, the Protestant missionaries were relatively few in number, but a sizeable number of them were mostly working at the Diocesan headquarters, writing religious literature, and helping with community and social services and in the hospitals. Many were in top teaching positions in the Protestant institutions as well. However, most of those in the institutions at various

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5 This is an underestimate. At the end of the war about 295 foreign priests were found still remaining in Biafra despite all the opportunity they had to leave during the war. They were arrested, tried, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonments and fines. All the sentences and fines were waived by the federal government. See T. O. Elias, "The Nigerian Crisis in International Law," Journal of International Law (Lagos, 1971).

6 Stremlau, International Politics, p. 115.

7 For example, Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Burke and others worked in Owerri Diocese, writing and selling religious literatures. Miss Barbara McCallum was a Social Welfare Worker in Port Harcourt Archdeaconry. There were many expatriate teachers, mostly women of Protestant faith at Egbu, Elenwa, Ogidi Girls' Secondary Schools. A large number of medical practitioners remained behind and as the war progressed, their rallying point was the multi-denominational hospital at Umuahia, Queen Elizabeth. Most of the doctors, though Protestants, were from Scandinavia, Nordic, and Baltic countries. There were few of them from the United Kingdom and America.
places did leave immediately at the outbreak of the conflict in 1967. The schools and colleges were closed on the order of Ojukwu in July, 1967.

Specifically clergy in both the Catholic and Protestant groups who chose to remain behind were indeed mostly those involved in evangelical, medical, and social work.

According to Stremlau:

First most priests decided to remain with their parishes when secession was declared, and did not evacuate with other foreigners. As federal troops advanced expatriate missionaries faced a second important decision—whether to stay with their parishioners when evacuation became necessary. Again most priests chose to be with their parishioners.  

It must be pointed out that both those who left and those who remained behind served useful purposes for the Biafran people. For most cases these two groups served as links between Biafra and the outside world. Those inside became information and news gatherers, and those outside were the main conduit through which those inside passed out the information for external dissimilation. In fact, "their transnational links were extensive."  

Both Wiseberg and Stremlau have commented that it was a difficult decision for the priests to make as to whether they should leave or remain with their parishioners.  

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8 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 118.  
9 Ibid.  
10 Ibid., pp. 118-112; Wiseberg, op. cit., p. 108.
One point must be made about these comments. In some cases, it must have been a difficult decision for some to make. If one considers how long some of these priests had lived in the region and how in the past many had refused to return to their countries of origin but had chosen to settle and die in the region after their retirement, one would not rush to the conclusion that their decisions to remain behind were difficult. In fact, many Reverend Fathers and Sisters before the war had almost Ibonized themselves in every facet of the cultural, social, and communal life of the people. Many spoke the Igbo language and understood its proverbs; almost all had domestic servants of Ibo origin.

The reason for this integrated community of foreign missionaries and local people was not difficult to find. Of all the things written in favor of or against the Ibos, one fact had always been overlooked. Ibos are a highly religious group. Once they embrace a particular religion, they give their soul and bodies to it. Their assumption of religious orders and display of obedience to their foreign Bible sellers is reminiscent of the Jesuit obedience.

It is, therefore, not hard to see why any foreign missionaries, particularly the Catholic clergy, decided to remain behind and to cast their fate with the fate of
those who had previously listened to their scripture teachings and sermons, and above all given them obedience and reverence. Also this explains why in the course of the war both the Roman Catholic and the Protestants through their international agencies—Caritas Internationalis and World Council of Churches, respectively—competed very highly in supplying relief materials to their adherents. Both groups joined in external propagation of news of the event and possible consequence in the war-torn Biafra.

The second variable which needs explanation as having played a significant role in awakening the conscience of people throughout Christendom was the collection and dissemination of this information overseas by those missionaries who remained behind and those who left. Ojukwu, the Biafran leader, a Catholic himself but surrounded by strong and influential arch-Protestants like Akanu Ibiam, who was once an executive member of the World Council of Churches, M. I. Okpara, and others, must have accurately estimated the importance of these foreign missionaries before secession was declared. As it turned out, they were, in fact, indispensable.

What is important also was that on the eve of the civil war, the three Protestant bishops in Eastern Nigeria were Ibos and six of the Catholic Bishops in the eight dioceses of the Roman Catholic church were Easterners. Of these, five
were Ibos, including the Archbishop Francis Arinze. With these important figures occupying the apex of the Roman Catholic and Protestant hierarchy, and with a large number of foreign missionaries around them, there was no way the Biafran Christian population could have been forsaken by those overseas.

Another point is worthy of mentioning. The Biafran propaganda machinery had tried fast and hard to project the civil war as a religious war. Such phases as "Hausa/Fulani hegemony," "To complete the Jihad," and "Hausa/Fulani ruling clique" were frequently used.\textsuperscript{11}

Connected with the attempt to project the war as a religious war was the effort to dub the war as one of genocide against the people of Biafra. In this respect, the Biafran authorities presented documentation and pictures of maimed and headless victims of the pogrom of July, 1966, in well-prepared literature and journals and distributed them overseas.

The projecting of the war as a religious and genocidal war worried many Christians throughout the Christendom. With the help of those missionaries who returned from Biafra and those still there, information on the conditions in the enclave were passed out. Wiseberg has aptly stated:

\textsuperscript{11} See Biafran Radio Newstalk of the period particularly for the period May 31 through December 31, 1967, and also see Ojukwu, Selected Speeches, Section 2, pp. 18-19.
... the missionaries' reporting on the conduct of the hostilities and on the effects of the war for their communities ... as the major—often the only expatriate source of news on conditions in the war zones (when they were able to send reports abroad), missionaries played an important role in defining the issues of the war. And there be little doubt that, in the first instance the concern of the Catholic and Protestant churches abroad was a reaction to reports they were receiving from missionaries in the field.12

Thus the two factors already explained certainly played important roles in arousing the consciences of people all over the world, particularly Christians, to make contributions of money, food, and other relief materials for the war victims in Biafra. This probably would not have been the case if the people of Eastern Nigeria had not had the fortune of being Christians. Also, the presence of zealous Holy Ghost Fathers and other fanatic foreign missionaries both Catholic and Protestants alike was an important factor. If Biafra had solely depended on the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for its relief supplies, millions of people would have died as a result of the politics of relief that surrounded the ICRC throughout the war.

12Wiseberg, International Politics of Relief, pp. 111-114.
Roman Catholic External Involvement

To raise funds, to collect donations, to buy relief materials, and to send same to the needy people in Biafra were the major concerns of the Catholic sympathizers throughout the Catholic world. The center of activities originated and concentrated in Ireland. This was not surprising. As has already been shown, attempts had been made to establish a link between the missionaries in Biafra and those in Ireland.

Apparently those missionaries who left Biafra before the war started carrying with them horrible memories of the pogrom which the Northerners unleashed on the Easterners in mid-1966. So once the war started officially, the Irish priests already overseas did not need further evidence of what the war was all about.

Either by planned underground political maneuver or by a conjecture, the first person who publicly spoke on behalf of the Biafran cause was not a Holy Ghost priest, but Conor Cruise O'Brien—a tough outspoken Irish-born scholar who was a controversial figure in the Congo as Dag Hammarskjold's Special Representative.¹³

Although in September, 1967, O'Brien had made a hurried visit to Biafra with two friends, his main thrust

came in an article he wrote refuting the attempt of some people to draw some analogy between Katanga and Biafran secession. In the United States, he called a press conference in which he called men of good will to prevent mass murder on a scale unparalleled as yet in Africa and strongly lamented the killing of Ibos. In fact, his public utterances gave Biafra her first world-wide publicity. It is hard to say that O'Brien's public support was due to his religious leanings or merely because of his genuine belief that "Ibos are condemned people."

In terms of yielding visible results, the most significant effort in Ireland directed by Holy Ghost Fathers to raise contributions for the Biafran civilian population was undertaken by Father Raymond Kennedy, who had worked in Eastern Nigeria for more than ten years and his brother, John O'Loughlin Kennedy. Both of them launched a public appeal in Ireland in a press conference in December, 1967, to raise funds in order to send food materials to Biafra. This appeal was successful, and

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16 90 Days: A Report of the First Ninety Days Activities of the Joint Biafra Famine Appeal (Dublin, 1968.)
a large quantity of food materials was bought and sent to Biafra by way of Sao Tome.

Having been encouraged by their first efforts, the two brothers intensified their public appeal. As a result of their efforts, with the assistance of other missionaries of different orders (Holy Ghost, Kiltegan, and Vincentian Fathers, including other eminent Irish religious and civic leaders) an organization known as African Concern was formed. Later on a more elaborate and all-embracing organization was formed known as the Joint Biafra Famine Appeal. The inauguration of this organization produced a unique combination of appearance, the presence of Bishop Whelan, former Catholic Bishop of Owerri Diocese and Bishop Cockin, Anglican Bishop of Owerri Diocese. The presence of these two prelates of different religions gave the gathering an aura of importance. Consequently, it stimulated public interest in Joint Biafra Famine Appeal.  

The most important contribution of the Joint Biafra Famine Appeal, in addition to cash contributions, was the purchase of a medium-size vessel which was used not only by Catholic Relief Organizations, but also by other

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17 Irish Times, June 27, 1968, p. 1. Bishop Whelan and Bishop Cockin returned to Ireland and England, respectively, after spending several years in the Eastern Region. Immediately thereafter the conflict started to assume violent dimensions.
agencies that were contributing relief materials to Biafran war victims.

In addition to stimulating public interest throughout Ireland, the Holy Ghost Fathers, through various means, lobbied the Irish government officials strenuously for open public support of Biafra. Although the government did not openly support the enclave, it did give all moral and financial support which would have promoted a peaceful settlement of the crisis. It did not want to alienate the federal military government, but neither did it want to abandon the victims of the war. Even if it had preferred not to have anything to do with the Biafran question, it could not have successfully done so in a country where religion and government are always congruent in many official policies of the church and the government. All government contributions were channeled through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and not through any of the organizations that had openly declared their support for Biafra and Biafrans.

As the head of the Roman Catholic Christendom, the position of the Pope in the Nigerian civil war was bound to have far-reaching effects in every Catholic nexus. More than the Irish Holy Ghost Fathers, the Pontiff's image, international status, and influence carried with them a considerable segment of the world population—not
only among Catholics but also among world leaders of various religions leanings.

If the Holy Ghost Fathers were actively involved and concerned with the Biafran population, it is reasonable to expect the Head of the Church to give his support and blessing to the cause to which his flock was committed. The difference between the Holy Ghost Fathers' activities in Biafra and those of the Pope was not in policy but in approach. While the Holy Ghost Fathers and other activists were giving open support through writings, commentaries, and public statements coupled with personal involvement in loading of planes, shipping of relief materials, and even helping to recruit pilots, the Pope gave cautious open support, always shaping his public statements to reflect discretion and fairness. Yet it seemed from all indications that the Pope, in fact, strongly supported Biafra and Biafrans and wished the people had not undergone agony and grief.

Having appealed to the authorities in Lagos and Enugu to settle their differences in a brotherly spirit, His Holiness dispatched his personal envoys--Monsignor Dominic Conway, Rector of the Irish College in Rome, and Monsignor George Rochau of Caritas Internationalis to Nigeria and Biafra with a message for the two leaders.18

The task before the envoys was not an easy one. The situation was as confusing as ever in Nigeria. The federal military government did not clearly understand the official policy of the Vatican. So Lagos did not know how to receive the delegation. To slight it would alienate the Vatican and probably drive it to a tough policy against Nigeria. On the other hand, to accord it the status of a full diplomatic delegation might be construed by the rebels as Vatican influence on Lagos. It was to the credit of Gowon and his "hawks" and "doves" that they gave the delegation a warm reception, even though subdued. The discussions were not overly cordial but the envoys did their best to maintain a posture of neutrality at all times. They were well aware that Gowon and his lieutenants were suspicious of everything that the Vatican represented.

The real confrontation came when the envoys requested a permit to travel to Biafra. This was rejected outright. While they were trying to decide what to do next, an important event happened in Biafra. Despite the federal land, sea, and air blockade, Reverend E. R. Johnson, a Presbyterian from a Canadian church, managed to enter Biafra through the Portuguese Island of Sao Tome. His

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19 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 121.
arrival in Biafra sparked off uneasiness among the Roman Catholic bishops in Biafra. Quickly they sent an influential and intelligent Holy Ghost priest, Father Anthony Byrne, to Rome to pressure the Holy See to send envoys to Biafra. If this would accomplish nothing else, it would reassure "his sheep" now in want of spiritual leadership. 20

The bishops' delegate to Rome was armed with a memorandum which reflected the feelings of these prelates at that time. They wrote:

We have grave reason to fear that the failure of the Mission to come to our Ecclesiastical Province would arouse deep resentment and even extreme reaction against the Church from both the military and our own Christians.

This was all the more to be feared because representatives of the World Council of Churches have visited the territory, and many Protestant Missionaries, who witnessed at first hand the tragic massacres, have not failed to give publicity to these events to their people and the world.

The arrival of the Papal Mission will be a source of the greatest solace to our people and will evoke their deepest gratitude, since they did not understand why the Papal Mission should be prevented from coming to them at a time when they felt abandoned by the whole world. 21


21 Memorandum submitted to the Pope on behalf of the Archbishop and Bishops of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province by Bishop James Moynagh of Calabar and Godfrey Okoye of Port Harcourt, cited in Wiseberg, op. cit., p. 117.
Since the Papal delegates to Nigeria had by now returned to Rome, it was possible for them to give their impressions of Lagos. It was also possible for Father Anthony to offer suggestions. Apparently convinced that there was need for his delegates to visit Biafra, His Holiness decided to send his envoys "by whatever means they could get there."

So, when the Papal envoys finally put their feet on Biafran soil in early January, 1968, the Roman Catholic Bishops were greatly relieved. The Catholic population in Biafra regained their pride and reaffirmed their loyalty to their ecclesiastical "Lord." In fact, before the arrival of the Papal envoys in Biafra, many Catholics had openly made bad comments about His Holiness. Although their anger was understandable, the Pope's guarded policy and action were justified. After all, he was the Pope of all Catholics throughout the world, including those in Nigeria.

An added dimension to the Papal envoys' visit was a large donation of drugs and food materials, and a cash donation of about $20,000 to Biafra's relief efforts through the Bishops. In addition, the Papal envoys' visit to Biafra had an added international dimension. 22

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According to the *Irish Times*, it was the first indication to the Biafrans that knowledge of their problems had percolated through what had seemed up to now an indifferent if not actually a hostile world. Indeed it was the first official delegation with international status that visited Biafra. Biafrans themselves must have obviously overestimated the importance of the visit and its future implications. However, it raised the morale of both the Catholic civilians and soldiers. It also proved one thing—that both the Catholics and the Protestants could count on the moral support of their foreign coreligionists.

The Papal involvement in the civil war did not stop with the successful visit of his envoys to Biafra. Throughout the war, His Holiness continued to urge the parties to a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Both in private and in public, the Pope showed great concern for the suffering victims of the war.

In all his public pronouncements, the Holy Father had carefully tried to avoid alienating the federal military government, but this did not earn him the praise of Nigerians. In an open attack on the Pope, the Nigerian Commissioner for Transport, Joseph Tarka, said in Rome:

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Nigeria would be prepared to fight France even if it took sides with secessionist Biafra. We are ready to fight everyone—even the French who have been beaten in Indo-China and Algeria. (In obvious reference to the Pope's stand on the Nigerian war, he continued.) Although I am a Catholic, you had better just call me a Christian.

In a similar attack, demonstrators in Lagos shouted "away with the Pope. We want a Catholic Church of Nigeria, independent of the Vatican." In a similar attack, demonstrators in Lagos shouted "away with the Pope. We want a Catholic Church of Nigeria, independent of the Vatican."

Essentially, the most visible external involvement of the Vatican in the Nigerian civil war was through its humanitarian agency—the Caritas Internationalis. From its Rome headquarters, Caritas Internationalis coordinated Catholic relief activities throughout the world. Because of its international activities and its coordinating and transporting capabilities, Lagos accused it of nefarious activities including gun-running and recruiting mercenaries for Biafra.

Funded by the Vatican, Caritas Internationalis virtually coordinated most of the relief materials that

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26 New Nigeria, August 10 and 14, 1968; Radio Nigeria Newstalk, August 14, 15, and 17, 1968.
27 Africa Confidential, June 3, 1969. (An article in this particular issue discussed the African difficulties facing the Vatican and also the declining influence of the Pope in Nigeria.)
were donated from all over the world, primarily by Catholic organizations and individuals.\footnote{28} Before undertaking the coordinating role, Caritas Internationalis mounted its own operation for relief supplies into Biafra as early as March, 1968, using Port Harcourt before it fell. Caritas Internationalis secured agreement with Captain Henry A. Wharton, a gun-running pilot with a great deal of confidence. Originally six charter flights were arranged, but once the Caritas Internationalis mounted its operations it never stopped until the end of the war.\footnote{29}

\footnote{28} During the war, among the Catholics as well as the Protestant organizations and other voluntary agencies, there was a lot of confusion in the relief operations, particularly in the areas of transportation into Biafra. Not many were able to fly into Biafra. Many could raise funds and contributions throughout the world but the best they could do was to transport these relief materials to the Portugese Island of Sao Tome. In this instance they needed a coordinating effort of a major relief organization. For this reason Caritas Internationalis took the coordinating work for many Catholic organizations. To fly into Biafra was a tedious and risky business and required often hard-to-come-by permission from the Biafran authorities. Permissions were not easily granted even though Biafrans needed relief materials badly. Code names had to be given and used accurately and these were not lavishly given. They were given only to trusted organizations in confidence. Caritas Internationalis was one of them. It had its own charter flight arrangements. Even some large organizations like the Catholic World Services (U.S.A.) and the like sent in their relief materials through Caritas Internationalis. Indeed, cooperation was inevitable during the relief operation. In most cases this was the only way out. For more coordinating efforts of the Caritas Internationalis, see Wiseberg, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 129-134.

\footnote{29} Wiseberg, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 129-134.
In 1969 alone, when the ICRC was involved in political technicalities of the relief issues, Caritas Internationalis found a way to send in relief supplies. Its determination and success could be demonstrated by the number of flights it made to Biafra in 1969 alone. 

In the first nine months of 1969, Caritas Internationalis spent $4 million in relief operations in Biafra and made about 265 flights into Biafra. Since contributions to Caritas Internationalis came from many geographical regions and ethnic groups throughout the world, it never ran out of relief materials to send into Biafra. To balance its activities, Caritas Internationalis also supplied relief materials, lorries, trucks, and medical supplies to the Nigerian side as well.

In all its relief activities, the Pope gave Caritas Internationalis his support, through its Secretary General, Monsignor Carlo Bayer. In fairness to His Holiness, he did his best to present a posture of impartiality throughout

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31 Caritas Internationalis coordinated the Catholic relief efforts in the following countries: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, Congo, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Japan, Hong Kong, Malawi, Jordan, Malta, Morocco, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Luxemburg, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, U. S. A., Venezuela, and others. Ibid.
the war. The magnitude of the killings and the extent of the starvation in Biafra must have worried him as a Christian leader. Loss of human lives—particularly in a useless war—must have been a heavy burden for the Pontiff to bear.

Although it may not be proved conclusively, it must be pointed out that the Pope's stand on the civil war in favor of Biafrans had a far-reaching effect in winning the friendship of the world's political and religious leaders of Catholic faith for the Biafran cause. Even the many official organs of the Church and those it supported throughout the world gave publicity to the plight of the civilian population in Biafra.

For example, in his most eloquent sermon Cardinal Heena, the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, strongly called for man's conscience to be awakened to the dreadful events in Nigeria;

There is a great deal of what has been well called selective indignation. Think how many marches and demonstrations have taken place against the Americans in Vietnam. But how many marches and demonstrations have there been against the massacre in Biafra? A neutral observer, the President of the Ivory Coast has declared recently that more people have been killed in the last ten months of the Biafran war than in three years in Vietnam. It is we, the British, who have supplied many of the instruments of death. As Christians we should not join only the popular protests.32

32 The Tablet, June 8, 1968, p. 586.
Similarly in a press release issued on Sunday, November 17, 1968, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, a staunch Catholic, wrote:

Decisions by our government relating to the civil war and destruction of human life in Nigeria-Biafra must not be lost in the mechanics of political transition, and cannot wait for the coming of a new administration.

I cannot accept the view that the deteriorating situation and extraordinary loss of life in Nigeria-Biafra is primarily an internal or African concern, and must be met within that context, however desirable this objective. The mere fact that arms are pouring into the area from many parts of the world to needlessly prolong violence at the expense of innocent millions, should tax the conscience of all mankind—especially that of our own Nation, whose traditions and ideals call for a maximum effort in the service of peace and the welfare of humanity.

... At stake are human lives—innocent lives—African lives—thousands, even millions of lives—whose destruction will burden the conscience of Nigeria-Biafra and all mankind for generations to come, unless something more is done to save them.33

The French Catholics in 1969 issued a statement calling on the world leaders to

... use every effort, everywhere, and at the same time to bring about: A stop to the provisions of arms and munitions; free access for relief supplies to both sides of the front where the conflict is raging, and the

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proclamation of an immediate cease-fire permitting negotiation to start without delay.\textsuperscript{34}

Noting that the French Red Cross airlift operating out of Libreville, Gabon continued to bring relief supplies into blockaded Biafra, the statement added:

We must meet this peril. We ask all men of good will to "leave no stone unturned" in their efforts. Their generosity toward those who are suffering from this atrocious war must speak out in favor of peace. Humanitarian considerations must be included in political projects.\textsuperscript{35}

It was statements like these supported by actions privately and publicly which helped keep the Nigerian civil war going for as long as it lasted. It would be wrong to speculate that all Catholics were in league with Biafra. The evidence was abundant that Catholics all over the world showed deep sympathy for the Biafran civilian population.

**Roman Catholic Internal Involvement**

As described above, the external involvement of the Catholic Church concentrated in the main on publicity, collection of food materials, and raising of funds and

\textsuperscript{34} Statement issued on behalf of French Catholics on Nigeria/Biafra conflict by Cardinals Marty and Gouyon, together with Bishops Maziers, Peuch, Vial, and Etchegaray (Paris), November 12, 1969.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
above all, awakening public conscience in favor of the Biafran regime in the name of humanitarianism. Since these relief materials were aimed at saving lives in the enclave itself, the main internal involvement was the distribution of these food materials and in collection of documents and information. These included pictures of dying and starving people of Biafra for external publicity. The transnational action of the Roman Catholic Church, therefore, involved the moving of a large amount of tangible items into Biafra for humanitarian purposes. The functional aspect of this was the distribution of these items. In the subsequent paragraphs, the organizational structures for the implementation of this aspect will be examined for two reasons. One, it will throw more light on the level of involvement and two, this will, in turn, provide evidence to support the hypotheses of this study.

As already indicated, throughout the war Caritas Internationalist maintained a base in the Portuguese Island of Sao Tome. Most of its relief flights originated from this port. Irrespective of from where the Caritas plane took off, it had to land at Uli airstrip—the only link between Biafra and the outside world. By day Uli was almost a ghost town. As the war progressed about mid-1969, its population had moved for fear of air raids.
In the evenings about six o'clock unmarked lorries and trucks belonging to the Caritas Internationalis would move in on the scheduled days when flights were expected. Because of the crowded activities at the airstrip, flight schedules were assigned to the relief organizations—Caritas Internationalis, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the World Council of Churches—but a greater number of periods were assigned to gun-carrying flights.

Once the plane landed, off-loading was a matter of minutes regardless of the amount of cargo. During peak periods when Caritas Internationalis had stepped up its relief operations, between three and four flights landed on the assigned day. Caritas Internationalis' headquarters in Biafra were at Umuowa, about twenty miles west of Uli. Umowa had a large Roman Catholic Girls' Secondary School.36

From this point distribution of relief materials was made on a parish basis to the Reverend Fathers in charge of these parishes. Once the relief materials got to the parish, the Reverend Fathers or Reverend Sisters made allocations according to needs. Since they had up-to-date data on refugee camps, sickbays, and feeding centers in their parishes, they allocated food materials to reflect

36 Osuji, op. cit., June 20, 1969.
the needs. For example, in sickbays where there were many children such food items as highly concentrated milk, egg yolk, and corn meal were provided, but in feeding centers and refugee camps where there were more adults than children, allocations concentrated on stockfish, rice, and beef.

One method of food distribution which eliminated pilferage and prevented food items from going to healthy people or to military men was a process by which Reverend Fathers took the food items to the needed places. For example, in a refugee camp at St. Charles Ogbor and St. Gregory Ihitteafoukwu, where more than six thousand refugees were camped, Reverend Father Diagnal, later on replaced by Father Dara, and Sister Mary-Terres brought in food items on Thursdays. Once every month, too, they brought clothing materials. In addition, they gave a substantial amount of cash for the purchase of other locally produced food materials and sleeping materials such as mats.37

The giving out of cash payments became more constant in the latter part of 1969 when federal bombardment of the Uli airstrip became more incessant. The amount given depended on the number of inmates. At big refugee centers

37 Ibid.
such as St. Charles Ogbor, Ikenazizi, and Okporo cash gifts ranged from six hundred to one thousand Biafran notes.  

Although every effort was made by Catholic Fathers to prevent food items going to soldiers, in many instances soldiers joined the lines at feeding centers and were fed. Also, it was a regular occurrence for starving and sick-looking soldiers with chaplets in their hands, and medals and signs of the cross on their necks, to appear before a sympathetic Reverend Father and ask for food or for a couple of pounds. More than likely their requests were honored.

For example, a former Biafran army officer recalled how he and other officers regularly went to the Caritas Relief Center at Okpuala near Aba while they were fighting at Aba sector.

We were three and each of us adopted a Catholic name—Dominic, Donatus, and Patrick. Although one of us was a Catholic, the Father always gave us a good quantity of food materials. I do not know whether he attended to us because he thought we were Catholics. But we took Catholic names for that purpose anyway.

38. Biafran notes were valued at $2.80 as the Nigerian pound. Although there was no formal foreign exchange value fixed on the Biafran notes, relief organizations apparently exchanged with Biafran authorities at this rate overseas for money they spent in Biafra. This was one of the ways the Biafran government raised foreign exchange for arms purchases. See Kennedy Lindsay, "How Biafra Pays for the War," Venture, 21 (March, 1969), p. 26.

On another occasion he recalled that it was more difficult for him and other soldiers to get food materials from Red Cross personnel. For this reason,

We planned an ambush of their trucks one afternoon. Unfortunately it was carrying only agricultural materials and these would not do us any good. But later in the week some soldiers went to their store and were well treated and given some cups of salt and tins of beef. We realized that our previous ambush had paid off.40

Thus, relief materials from the Caritas Internationalis directly, but in most cases indirectly, went into the hands of soldiers and other able-bodied Biafran people. All of these things happened despite a well-organized structure set up by Caritas Internationalis in the enclave.

Therefore, both in its external as well as internal activities, the Catholic Church directly and indirectly supported the Biafran cause. Officially, however, it meant only to help the suffering and starving civilian population, particularly women and children in the name of transnational humanitarianism.

Protestant External Involvement

The external involvement of Protestant churches in the Nigerian civil war must be considered in the light of the activities of the World Council of Churches, an

40 Ibid.
international body comprising the representatives of Protestant churches all over the world. Its headquarters are located in Geneva. An analysis of the activities of the Protestant churches in the war presents some analytical problems because of their various branches and autonomous chains of command. However, by using the World Council of Churches as a unit of analysis, it will be possible to examine the activities of the Protestant churches.\textsuperscript{41}

The point must be stressed that this is not an arbitrary selection. In fact, during the war the World Council of Churches assumed the coordinating role for the Protestant churches. Its relief operations were handled and directed by its Caritas Internationalis equivalent, the Division of International Church Aid, Refugee and World Service. Throughout the war and during peace times,

\textsuperscript{41}Although Rome did not and perhaps could not have controlled the activities of various Catholic organizations and individuals during the war regarding their involvements, the Papal stand must have influenced their activities. Similarly, many Protestant churches in Canada, Sweden, Norway, North America, Germany, and Great Britain were not obliged to make their contributions to the World Council of Churches, but for logistic purposes, they chose to do so. However, there was no uniform policy which every Protestant church must subscribe to regarding their stand on the war. Each was free to do what it wished. Nonetheless, the World Council of Churches was looked upon as the official agency of the Protestant churches. Many governments and the Vatican treated it as such.
the World Council of Churches is certainly an international organization of the Protestant churches.

Although there were more Roman Catholics than Protestants in the Eastern Region, the latter had more representation in the Biafran government than the former. For example, except for Ojukwu himself, most of the important members of his Executive Council and Advisers were Protestants. Akanu Ibiam, M. I. Okpara, Kenneth Dike, and Sir Louis Mbanefo were Protestants. More important, except M. I. Okpara, all three were Executive Members of the Christian Council of Nigeria—a national coordinating body for all the Protestant churches in Nigeria. Most important, Ibian was a Vice President of the World Council of Churches, and as an Adviser to Ojukwu, his dual position must have been an asset to Biafra and Biafrans as will be demonstrated later in this section.

In terms of position and importance, both Mbanefo and Dike were great assets too. Then the Chief Justice of the Eastern Region and a member of the Federal Nigeria

42 Akanu Ibiam was a British Knight but as a result of his disappointment with the British Government's handling of the Nigerian civil war, he renounced his Knighthood and returned the insignia to the Queen. He also renounced his Christian name, Francis, and assumed his family given name, Akanu. Osuji, op. cit.
Supreme Court, Mbanefo had just completed his term in the International Court of Justice. His world-wide connection in the legal profession was well known. Similarly, Kenneth Dike was formerly the Vice Chancellor of the first Nigerian University at Ibadan. A scholar of international standing, he had many friends in Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom, and in the United States.

As these three eminent Biafrans were members of the World Council of Churches, it is possible that they helped draw the Council into the conflict. Although the World Council of Churches itself was genuinely concerned with the humanitarian aspect of the war from the onset, as events showed later, it changed its perception of the war, and adopted a legalistic posture towards the end of the war which caused internal rebellion and resulted in some member churches leaving it to join the Joint Church Aid.43

The external involvement of the Protestant churches did not, however, take the vigorous path followed by the Catholic Fathers in Ireland. Rather it started gradually, picking up steam in the process.

Officially, the Protestants' involvement broke into the open when the leadership of the major British Protestant churches issued a strong statement urging the British government to stop arms sales to the Nigerian government as this would prolong the fighting and increase the bitterness now felt in the Eastern Region. We believe that the paucity of arms on both sides of the conflict is a vital factor which may shorten the period before negotiations bring a solution to the problem now confronting the Federation.

Our intimate knowledge of the peoples of the Eastern Region leads us to the conviction that no scale of escalation in the hands of the federal government will suffice to subjugate that Region. We are, therefore, anxious that H. M. Government should not share in a course of action which can only lead to a protracted suffering which a cessation of armed conflict and a return to negotiation could prevent.44

Although not an official statement of the World Council of Churches, the statement above clearly demonstrated a bias for Biafra. It was not clear what prompted this statement, but one explanation is possible. In a radio broadcast at Enugu, Ibiam had accused Nigeria of waging a war of genocide against the people of Biafra.45 According to Wiseberg, "as a man highly

respected in Protestant circles abroad, Ibiam's charges caused anxiety among members of the World Council of Churches.\textsuperscript{46}

Ibiam's radio broadcast and his subsequent tour of Europe and America must have stimulated greater interest of the Biafrans among the inner circle of the World Council of Churches. Hence, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in its meeting at Crete in August, 1967, passed a Resolution which stated:

The Central Committee is much distressed to observe the deterioration of the situation in Nigeria, even during the days of its meeting. It sends to Sir Francis Ibiam, a President of the World Council of Churches, who has rendered such a signal service to the cause of the Gospel in Africa, its Christian greetings and an assurance of the prayers of his friends. The Committee earnestly hopes and prays that an escalation of the arms race may be prevented and that it may even be possible for an acceptable mediator to be found. It expressed its particular sympathy with member churches throughout all the territories of the area, and with all of any community, region, or faith who have suffered in the fighting.\textsuperscript{47}

Although initially—until November, 1968—the World Council of Churches' involvement was restricted to the issuing of statements, material aid totaling $30,000.

\textsuperscript{46} Wiseberg, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 119.

\textsuperscript{47} Release of the British Council of Churches, Conference of British Missionary Societies, Joint International Department of the Resolution Adopted by World Council of Churches in a meeting held in Crete, August, 1967.
was passed through the ICRC in November. However, what Biafra needed at this time more than any other thing was publicity overseas. Clearly, the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Irish Kennedy brothers were working very hard to raise the issues overseas, particularly in the Catholic world. The Protestant community equally needed an apostle of the Kennedy-brothers type to spread the message of Biafra's plight and need for support among the Protestant adherents throughout the world.

The "apostle" came in the person of Reverend E. H. Johnson, a senior official of Overseas Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. He made a trip to Biafra, and since he was a member of the World Council of Churches, his visit to Biafra had some degree of international importance attached to it. He made a similar visit to Lagos and had a considerable discussion with members of the federal government. Once he returned to Canada, his perception of the war was clearly in favor of Biafra.48

Reverend Johnson made contacts with a good number of members of the Canadian House of Commons to acquaint them with the situation in Biafra. In testimony to a Committee of the House, he declared:

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48 Wiseberg, op. cit., p. 125.
I went to Biafra and to Lagos persuaded of two things—that a solution must have two minimal points. First, there must be a guarantee of majority for the Ibos in their own hands which is satisfactory to them. Second, that it should happen within some kind of entity called Nigeria. I came away from Biafra with the feeling that that entity—any kind of unified federation—could be unacceptable to them.49

In addition, he advocated a policy of neutrality for the Canadian government and urged it to persuade Britain to stop arms support for the federal military government.

The most important challenge to the federal military government over its blockade was made by a group of British churches in early March when a delegation supported by these churches flew into Biafra without clearance from Lagos. This was followed by a delegation of two important Protestants—Reverend J. L. Wilson, Bishop of Birmingham, and Cecil Patterson, Archbishop of West Africa. Although a similar delegation was concurrently sent to Lagos, it was clear to Lagos at this time that the Catholic and Protestant worlds were united in support of both sides but more in sympathy with Biafra.

This assertion is supported by a lengthy statement jointly issued by the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches declaring that

The Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches unite in one voice in a most urgent appeal to both contesting parties for an immediate cessation of armed hostilities in this sad conflict and for the establishment of a lasting peace by honourable negotiations in the higher tradition of Africa.

... We further point out that war is an inhuman and futile attempt to settle disputes. In this sad conflict, especially, armed hostilities cannot achieve a settlement of differences; on the contrary they are liable to bring, on a scale that is frightening to contemplate, only further loss of life, starvation, suffering and devastation. Even if, against all right reason, armed hostilities continue, the parties can never achieve peaceful co-existence without a negotiated settlement. The longer hostilities endure, the more innocent lives will be sacrificed in violence and bloodshed, the more impoverished and devastated will become this beloved erstwhile land of promise.

... We appeal, in particular, to the African Chiefs of State to offer the contribution of their counsel, their suggestions and, should the case arise, their mediation, with a view to the resolution of this sad conflict.

While it is not our part to declare on the issue of contention, we are bound to call the most immediate attention to the sacred issue of human life itself, which is so seriously threatened on such a vast scale by the horrors and effects of the war. We, therefore, urge governments and international agencies in a position to act effectively in this matter to secure a denial of external military assistance to both parties, an immediate cessation of hostilities, the necessary assurance of security to both sides on the laying down of arms, and a negotiated peace.

Deeply concerned with the needs for relief in the necessities of life among suffering people,
we appeal for cooperation among all international relief agencies in meeting the grave needs which will continue long after armed hostilities have ceased. We request that understanding facilities be extended by both sides to such international agencies for the supply of relief, and to ministers of religion and mercy whose privileged role in the distribution of the relief is of particular importance in this situation.  

From then on, the civil war in Nigeria assumed an international outlook with a cloak of religious concern. Since many world leaders, particularly in Europe, North America, Scandanavia, and Latin America were already concerned, the joint statement had a tremendous impact on the further developments throughout the world about the war. Relief efforts became a matter of concern to many Christians.

A major step forward in favor of Biafra was made in the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches which met in Uppsala, Sweden, in July, 1968. The presence of representatives of both the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Caritas Internationalis gave the gathering an aura of "international humanitarianism."  

The presence of two delegations from "one country" presented the Uppsala Assembly with problems of protocol.

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More important was the fact that the heterogeneous composition of the Assembly and individual perceptions of the conflict heightened problems in reaching a quick decision on what to do.

At stake was the question of whether or not independent airlifts were to be established separately for Biafra or whether one airlift was to be established for the entire country. With the presence of Ibiam, and in view of his personal relationship with many members of the Assembly, Biafra could not lose in this instance. Although the Resolution reflected the eagerness of the Assembly to avoid partisanship, by recognizing the urgent need for relief efforts in "the former Eastern Region," the Assembly inadvertently accorded de facto recognition to Biafra, even if it was a "former Eastern Region."

The principal agreements adopted in the Resolution were:

1. That in order to expand and intensify existing World Council of Churches' relief operations beyond the goal of $3,000,000 in cash and goods already almost achieved, a new additional appeal for $3,000,000 be launched forthwith:

2. That as an immediate step the World Council of Churches, through its division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service, in cooperation with Caritas Internationalis and the International Committee of the Red Cross, make a new and vigorous attempt to mount a continuous and effective airlift which can move supplies from suitably equipped points to distribution centres in need areas:

3. That the appropriate agencies of the World Council of Churches pursue with governments
concerned and international organizations the various alternative methods of securing the delivery of relief including the possibility of establishing "mercy corridors" and increased air deliveries.\textsuperscript{52}

Although Wiseberg has argued that this statement was not favorable to Biafra because of the careful omission of the term "Biafra," it must be understood that given the tense atmosphere of the conference, the statement must be considered a victory for Biafra, at least in one respect. It recognized the need for a separate airlift to the enclave. As had been indicated above, there was an implicit de facto recognition of Biafra even if it was referred to as "the former Eastern region."

One point that emerged from this Assembly was the reluctance of the World Council of Churches to take immediate action in Biafra. Unlike the Caritas Internationalis, which took decisive action, the World Council of Churches was hesitant. It was sensitive to the political implications of its position.

Despite the attitude of the Council at Uppsala, following its resolution the members of the Division of Inter-Church Aid discussed the possibility of starting an airlift in conjunction with the ICRC in an effort to implement the Resolution. Because of the ICRC rejection,\textsuperscript{52}

\textsc{Ibid.}
this idea was dropped. The World Council of Churches' approach seemed irritating to a group of German Protestant and Catholic churches (the majority and originators of the idea were Protestant churches), and they sought a way for an immediate airlift to Biafra. To them, hunger and protocol are incompatible. Quickly, they purchased five DC-7C aircraft and signed a contract on July 15 with a Captain Warton to operate them. 53

In addition, Danish and Norwegian Protestant churches were negotiating with Captain Lucien Pickett for a Super Constellation to shuffle from Fernando Poo to Biafra, and the Church World Service (U.S.A.) was also negotiating an aircraft charter contract. 54

One report on the World Council of Churches' situation was written by Eugene Carson Blake, the General Secretary, in a document which has since become known as the "Uppsala Mandate." In it he wrote:

1. It was agreed by all parties concerned, i.e., Division of Inter-Church Aid Refugees and World Services and cooperating agencies, at Uppsala that the Division of Inter-Church Aid Refugees and World Services should continue all its efforts to bring relief to the victims of the Nigeria/Biafra conflict in close cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross. This position

54 Ibid., pp. 231-233.
was reaffirmed in the joint statement on Nigerian relief by the International Committee of the Red Cross, Caritas Internationalis, UNICEF, and the World Council of Churches dated 16th August, 1968.

2. It was also understood that, while the Division of Inter-Church Aid Refugees and World Services could not act directly of Sao Tome, we were however, satisfied to see that some individual agencies tried to break through the blockade bringing food and medical supplies into Biafra ex Sao Tome or Fernando Poo. (It ought to be remembered that the first four flights from Lisbon into Biafra were chartered and paid by the Division of Inter-Church Aid, Refugees and World Services.)

3. We see now that the number of agencies supplying aircraft and crews on the Sao Tome/Biafra airlift is increasing and we are grateful that with the larger number of flights the aid extended to victims is being considerably increased.

4. We have been asked whether the name of the World Council of Churches can be used in connection with the Sao Tome/Biafra airbridge. We sincerely believe that what matters is the increase of food to victims and not the name connected with the airbridge. Since adding the name of the World Council of Churches to that airlift will not increase aid we believe therefore that it is better to omit our name (emphasis added).

5. We would once more like to explain that our policy in not operating from Sao Tome and in supporting the actions of the International Committee of the Red Cross from Fernando Poo are mainly due to two facts:
   (a) For most African countries Portugal and its possessions in Africa are an expression of European colonialism and anybody who associates with them shows a lack of feeling for the spirit of freedom and independence of the new African nations
   (b) We are in no position to prejudge the outcome of the hostilities in Nigeria but we must recognize that we have also a large church constituency in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and it would be tragic if, at a time when hostilities have ceased, we would
be unable to extend our aid for reconstruction and development to all communities affected by the war. In supporting the relief actions of the International Committee of the Red Cross, we believe that we are keeping the doors open.55

With this statement, the German Protestant and Catholic relief agencies, Das Diakonische Werk and Deutscher Caritasverband, went ahead and purchased five DC-7Cs from the German airlines Sudflug. They decided to base these flights at Sao Tome for two reasons. First, Caritas Internationalis had previously succeeded in flights into Biafra from Sao Tome. Second, Sao Tome's airport was open twenty-four hours a day, while the airport at Santa Isabel on Fernando Poo was closed at dusk by the Spanish authorities, thus limiting any aircraft to a maximum of one flight per night. This was certainly an important consideration because all relief flights had to be made at night due to the danger of daylight interception by the Nigerian Air Force. With all arrangements completed and with relief materials available, the first airlift from the German churches landed at Uli on July 26, 1968.56

Danchurchaid, another humanitarian agency belonging to the Protestant churches in Denmark, entered into an agreement with a broker in London, Clarkair International

55Ibid., pp. 4-6. 56Ibid., p. 6.
for the charter of a Super Constellation 1049-H aircraft. It was christened "Angel of Mercy." This was an attempt to start an airlift from Fernando Poo which could transport into Biafra the large quantities of Norwegian stockfish and other relief supplies arriving there. The Danchurchaid was worried about the mounting deaths in Biafra due to starvation and was not satisfied with the amount of food going in intermittently.

The aircraft landed on the Spanish Island on July 26, four days after it had been chartered. On board was a representative of Danchurchaid, Captain Duch. In negotiations with August Lindt, who was asked for assistance in matters of codes and frequencies to enable an aircraft to fly to Biafra, Lindt refused. He made it clear that he and the ICRC did not approve of the churches' effort to start an airlift, and that they were not interested in a joint venture anyway, thus reiterating his earlier rejection of the same appeal from the churches.

However, he reluctantly issued a Red Cross passport to Captain Duch so that he could personally make the request from the Biafran authorities at Umuahia. Captain Duch then traveled to Biafra, but because Lindt had not kept his word to discuss Duch's arrival with the Red Cross delegate in Biafra, he was arrested for previously
hijacking a Biafran aircraft. He was eventually deported within a week after earlier attempts failed to do so.

Captain Duch arrived in Fernando Poo, a disappointed man. He had a discussion with Lindt, who expressed suitable apologies and the hope that it had been due to a misunderstanding somewhere. It was decided in Copenhagen after consultation with Captain Duch by telephone to abandon the attempt to fly from Fernando Poo. Then the Danish cargo was turned over to the ICRC, which carried it to Biafra in its own aircraft. Then the aircraft contract with Clarkair International was terminated. 57

Three things were clear from this venture:

1. That the Protestant churches were anxious to make their contributions in Biafran relief efforts;

2. That the ICRC attitude became clear to other agencies trying to start their own airlift operations to Biafra;

3. The insight gained by Captain Duch became useful to a larger Protestant relief organization--Nordchurchaid.

There was, in fact, an increased desire by Protestant churches in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Germany to break

57 Ibid., p. 7. The allegation that Captain Duch had previously hijacked a Biafran plane was a mere cover. In fact, he was merely suspected of being an agent of the Nigerian government.
the blockade independently of the ICRC, and efforts continued. It was not long before they did so.

Flying a Transair Sweden DC-7B chartered by Deutscher Caritasverband, Captain Carl Gustav von Rosen arrived on Sao Tome August 11, 1968. On arrival he was met by Father Anthony Byrne of Caritas Internationalis and the Governor of the island. Since these two were deeply concerned about the fate of the starving Biafran children, they put pressure on Captain von Rosen to fly his cargo of medicine directly into Biafra.

At first, according to Nordchurchaid's report, he refused to consider flying to Biafra because of the lack of a contract or adequate insurance coverage. After considerable discussion, von Rosen decided that on the basis of information he received from Father Byrne, he had no choice but to try to fly into Biafra.

Von Rosen first joined one of Warton's pilots on an attempt to reach Uli. This attempt failed, as the pilot could not contact any International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) aircraft and assumed they were not flying

58 Captain von Rosen flew relief planes for the ICRC in Abyssinia, Poland, and Finland and for the U.N. in the Congo. He was a highly idealistic man. He, later on in 1969, reconstructed the Biafran Air Force and carried out several destructive raids against the Nigerian Air Force, events that nearly changed the history of the war. See Stremlau, op. cit., pp. 324-327.
due to the danger involved. On this basis, the German church plane returned to Sao Tome before reaching the Nigerian coast.

Captain von Rosen then switched to the Transair aircraft and took off for Uli at four o'clock in the evening of August 12, 1968. Flying at a low altitude all the way to Uli to avoid possible radar-controlled flak, he landed in Biafra just before sunset. On arrival in Biafra, because of his exploit, he was granted an audience with Ojukwu. 59

While Captain von Rosen was in Biafra, his other crew members flew the aircraft back to Sao Tome. They made several other flights during which time they took on board Lloyd Garrison of the New York Times and Dr. E. Johnson of the Canadian Presbyterian Church, who, since his visit to Biafra and Nigeria, had been doing much public relations work for the Biafran cause.

Captain von Rosen's successful flight into Biafra established three things: (1) that the Nigerian blockade of Biafra had been broken, (2) that daylight flights were possible because the Nigerian Air Force was not alert, and (3) that the churches had become an important factor in the relief operation independent of the World Council

of Churches, which had supported the ICRC and had thus stood aloof from other Protestant churches.

Without knowing of the development in Biafra's airlift operations, Lindt called a press conference in Geneva on August 16 to explain why the ICRC was not flying steadily into Biafra. Johnson was quick to use the opportunity to tell the press that the blockade had been broken by Captain von Rosen and that he had reached agreement with Ojukwu to continue flying relief materials from Sao Tome.

Pastor Mollerup of Danchurchaid, who since the Uppsala conference had been trying to establish an independent airlift operation, met with von Rosen and discussed the matter with him. Following other subsequent meetings with the representatives of Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish Protestant churches, an agreement to charter aircraft jointly to form an airlift from Sao Tome to Biafra under the leadership of Captain von Rosen was reached. This became Nordchurchaid. With this agreement and subsequent flights, the Biafran air relief operation was established, surpassing in degree, intensity, regularity, and persistency those of the ICRC.

Even though very progressive in its success, the Nordchurchaid was still anxious to subject its operations to those of the ICRC. To achieve this, Pastor Mollerup
and Captain von Rosen met with Lindt in Geneva for this arrangement. Lindt felt it would be wisest "not to put all the eggs in one basket."^60

Once the Nordchurchaid agreement of cooperation was formalized, those represented were Føkkekirken Nødhjælp, Denmark; Krykans U-landshjalp, Finland; Kirken Nødhjelp, Norway; and Lutherhjalpen, Sweden. In addition, Ludwig Geissel of the Das Diakonische Werk represented the German Protestant and Catholic churches' airlift from Sao Tome, and Reverend William Aitkin of the World Council of Churches represented the organizations running the refugee and relief work in Biafra.

Based on the agreement signed in Malmo on August 26, 1968, which established Nordchurchaid, member agencies of the group continued their pattern of ad hoc cooperation throughout the next year and a half until the end of the airlift operations in January, 1970. This cooperation was facilitated because of a unanimity of objective among members—to support Biafran war victims with relief materials at all cost.

The financial commitments of the Nordchurchaid members were clearly stated in the agreement. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were paying more than Finland. However, a

^60Ibid., p. 11.
member was free to pick up the responsibility of another member in case it was unable to meet its obligation.

In addition to supplying relief materials, the group supplied equipment for use inside Biafra, although some of these were purely national donations which were not considered a part of the Nordchurchaid contributions either financially or operationally.

It must be pointed out that the organization of Nordchurchaid was, in fact, functional; no new headquarters were set up to serve the airlift. A General Secretariat was established in Copenhagen by expanding the staff of Danchurchaid and by drawing heavily on the services of the personnel, public relations, and accounting departments of that office.

Contributions were coordinated so as to reflect the need in Biafra. For example, the stockpile of relief materials in Sao Tome in December, 1969, is reflected in Table XVII.

Although these figures show a greater supply for stockfish, condensed milk, corn soya meal, dried beans, and salt, the latter was the greatest in demand and the most expensive in a typical Biafran market at that time. For example, in late 1968 or mid-1969, the average cost for one cup of salt was $15.00, whereas a medium-sized stockfish averaged $10.00. However, stockfish was in great demand.
### TABLE XVII

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF RELIEF MATERIALS BY NORDCHURCHAID AVAILABLE IN SAO TOME FOR SHIPMENT TO BIAFRA DECEMBER, 1969**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Quantity (Tons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stockfish</td>
<td>5,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk powder</td>
<td>4,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condensed milk</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn soya meal</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg powder</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried beans</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler food</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20,100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Surprisingly, milk, and corn soya meal, which helped a kwashiokor victim more than any of the other food items, were not in great demand. Because of this, milk in particular was used in large quantities at sick-bays and feeding centers.~\(^{61}\)

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~\(^{61}\)Osuji, *op. cit.*
Perhaps the most striking aspect of the relief operations by Nordchurchaid within Biafra was the regularity and normalcy with which it continued throughout the entire operations period up to January, 1970, when Biafra collapsed. This meant that once the ICRC plane was shot down in June, 1969, the backbone of relief operations to Biafra was sustained by the Joint Church Aid, which was an umbrella for all of these relief agencies. Attention should now be turned to the Joint Church Aid activities in the relief operations.

Joint Church Aid As An Umbrella

The emergence of the Joint Church Aid was accidental. It arose out of a need for a broader coordination which emphasized specialization or division of functions among member agencies in the Nordchurchaid, and for the widening of membership. Although Nordchurchaid, as already indicated, comprised six national organizations from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Germany, and Caritas Internationalis, some other national organizations which were willing to contribute food to Biafra through Nordchurchaid had a regional bias. Since members were anxious to get more food into Biafra, they were receptive to any suggestion for the broadening of the organization.
The opportunity came when Caritas Internationalis invited members of the Nordchurchaid to a meeting in Rome between November 8 and 9, 1968. The aim was to discuss how to increase the capacity of airlifts. At that meeting it was agreed that due to the condition of airports at Uli and Sao Tome, the solution was larger aircraft, not more aircraft.

The ideal type for the job was the Hercules C-130, which could carry twenty tons, land easily under primitive conditions, and was equipped for para-dropping or free-dropping if the airport in Biafra should be closed or captured. Investigations were made in the United States and one such plane was located. Then there was need for a representative body to sign the contract on behalf of the churches. For this the name Joint Church Aid was suggested, and accepted. As it turned out, due to some difficulties, the arrangement for the securing of the C-130 did not materialize. Something more important had been achieved.\(^2\) The Joint Church Aid/USA became the designation for the churches ad hoc cooperation to procure and fly relief supplies from Sao Tome to Biafra, and the name was registered in America.

After the formation of the Joint Church Aid, many agencies joined, including Swiss Caritas, Catholic Relief Services, Church World Service, all U.S.A. and many other Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish agencies. When the Joint Church Aid was formed, public opinion in the United States was pressuring the government to do more for the starving people of Biafra. The time was ripe for more involvement by the U.S. government. From that time on, the U.S. government utilized the Joint Church Aid to channel funds to Biafra. 63

By December, 1968, the American agencies in the Joint Church Aid were already negotiating with the State Department for the purchase at a nominal price of Boeing C-97G stratofreighters located at a National Guard Armory in California. Eight of these were bought; four were turned over to the Joint Church Aid/USA and another four were given to ICRC. 64

The question arose as to who would fly these aircraft to Africa. The U.S. government was not in a position to provide military men to fly them because of its policy of positive neutrality on political and military


64 State Department, Status Report, January, 1970.
matters. At the same time, it was committed to a policy of positive humanitarian aid. The problem was solved, however, when eight members of the California National Guard resigned and accepted contracts from the Joint Church Aid/USA to fly these planes. According to a State Department report, this sparked strong opposition from the federal military government. With the acquisition of these four planes, the operation of the Joint Church Aid assumed a greater dimension. In addition, the Canadian group, Canairelief, placed the first of its Lockheed Superconstellation Freighters at the disposal of the Joint Church Aid.

According to Nordchurchaid's report:

Joint Church Aid never set up a headquarters or permanent staff; nor did it ever have a budget or financial commitments. It was simply an umbrella under which church relief agencies provided relief supplies to Biafra. There was no constitution or formal commitment, no membership, privileges, or obligations. But there was a clear understanding that agencies participating in the relief operations would follow the guidelines adopted by the plenary session and abide by the decisions of the Executive Working Group. The strength of the Joint Church Aid lay solely in the willingness of the participating agencies to accept these terms and to subordinate their individual activities to the common goal.

65 Ibid. 66 Ibid. 67 Nordchurchaid, op. cit., p. 103.
Yes, despite the lack of formal structure, or perhaps because of it, the Joint Church Aid was a remarkably efficient consortium which provided strong, active leadership on both operational and parliamentary matters. It functioned at several levels.

The achievement of the Joint Church Aid can be measured by the amount of relief materials it shipped to Biafra during a period of ten months in 1969. These items are shown in Table XVIII.

It must be stressed that given the situation prevailing at that time, both in Sao Tome and at Uli, it must have been difficult to get a correct report. Nevertheless, the figures show a great deal of effort on the part of the Joint Church Aid. The acquisition of more planes, particularly those of C-97s and one Lockheed from the Canadian agency helped to make this huge amount of relief materials possible.

Furthermore, given the number of flights and cargoes that were still moving in from Santa Isabel by the World Council of Churches and other relief agencies, particularly the French Red Cross, which throughout the war maintained its own independent airlift, the amount of food in Biafra at the time of its collapse must have been enormous.

There is one distressing note to all of this. Despite the Joint Church Aid's success, most of the credit due it
## TABLE XVIII

**BREAKDOWN OF CARGO LIFTED JANUARY-OCTOBER, 1969**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity (Tons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milkpowder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-ration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carbohydrate with High Protein</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn soya meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carbohydrate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn meal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cereals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Food and Salt</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicine</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fuel, Spareparts, and Vehicle</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Commodities</strong> (Including hospital equipment for the Adventis Mission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*After Nordchurchaid, op. cit., p. 158.
in Biafra, at least among the people, went to the World Council of Churches. This was due to three factors. First, the World Council of Churches was well known and had been associated with relief operations since the early days of the war. Second, the World Council of Churches had provincial stores which people could readily identify. Third, among Biafra's average citizenry were only three relief agencies supplying them food—the ICRC, Caritas Internationalis, and the World Council of Churches. At a point in Biafra each of these three relief organizations was noted for one specific thing: the ICRC for being too arrogant, aloof, and too bureaucratic; Caritas Internationalis for being regular in supplying refugee centers even if not with large quantities of foods at a time; and the World Council of Churches was noted for large rations. Yet each produced for the population some special food materials that made them different from the others: the ICRC was noted for their rich salty beef cans; Caritas Internationalis was noted for good quality of salt; and the World Council of Churches was noted for the large size of stockfish. But in all, among the Biafran refugees, sickbay patients, regular feeding center attendants, and those in position to receive food, both
the World Council of Churches and Caritas Internationalis were dear to the heart of all.\textsuperscript{68}

This does not suggest the insignificance of the Joint Church Aid; rather it means that the Joint Church Aid was mostly concerned with "getting the job done" rather than with publicity. The group in the Joint Church Aid, after all is said and done, included those who saved Biafra up to that point. For after the cessation of the ICRC flights in June, 1969, only the pilots of the Joint Church Aid were flying in relief materials, despite increased Nigerian bombardment of Uli. It was the Joint Church Aid which stood firm to continue soliciting for relief materials from member agencies throughout the world.

Above all, when the World Council of Churches issued a statement on December 8, 1969, saying in effect that it was withdrawing from further supply of relief to Biafra pending the resolution of the conflict, the Joint Church Aid members issued a lengthy statement saying,

\textbf{... The organizations participating in the Joint Church Aid all recognize that relief work has political side effects. This is true of relief work in Nigeria as in Biafra, but they do not see that they are left with any choice. The Joint Church Aid has supported directly and indirectly all initiative to establish more regular and effective alternatives to night flights. To stop the airlift now would not only have political consequences, but also result in the death

\textsuperscript{68}Osuji, \textit{op. cit.}
of millions of innocent civilians. It would establish starvation not only as a legitimate weapon of war but also as a partisan tool in the hands of groups pursuing their own motives.

In our continued cooperation we are strongly supported by the encouragement which we receive regularly from leaders and church people in Africa as well as from the rest of the world. We continue to call on all governments to accept their obligations to take political and diplomatic actions that will bring both sides of the conflict to the negotiation table. We will support them in all the attempts they might take to achieve this difficult but most vital goal, provided they, in their attempts, will not tamper with the integrity of serious relief operations, as we reject everything that will mix relief work with politics.

Concerned to follow the divine law which commands that above all we serve our neighbour in need we have no alternative but to continue the relief work for as long as it is an effective means of alleviating the present suffering.

The statement ended with a note that

This statement is given as a reply not only to the World Council of Churches which requested Joint Church Aid to review its position but also to clarify to the world at large the position and motives of the agencies working together in the Joint Church Aid.

From the statement of the World Council of Churches calling on the Joint Church Aid to review its relief operations in Biafra and from the Joint Church Aid's reply to the World Council of Churches, three points emerge. First, by resorting to calling on the Joint Church Aid to review its operations in Biafra, the World Council of Churches was still concerned with political
implications of the relief operations. Desire to maintain
good relationships with their "Christian brothers in both
Nigeria and Biafra" was dear to the organization. As a
transnational actor with political and religious interests
on both sides of the lines, this was understandable.

Second, the World Council of Churches recognized the
successful operations mounted by the Joint Church Aid;
hence, it directed its appeal to the Joint Church Aid.
The combined efforts of member agencies in the Joint Church
Aid, particularly since the U.S.A. relief organizations
joined had, in fact, alleviated the sufferings of the
Biafran population. By asking the Joint Church Aid to
review its operations, the World Council of Churches was
in effect foreseeing the eventual collapse of Biafra and
was, therefore, anxious to mend fences with Nigeria.

Third, and most important, the response from the
Joint Church Aid was appropriate. It was unpretentious
and revealing. The Joint Church Aid believed in what it
was doing. It recognized the fact that no matter how one
looked at the relief question in Biafra, one would find
political implications. "But concerned to follow the
divine law which commands that above all we serve our
neighbors in need," the Joint Church Aid had put service
to mankind above partisan politics. Furthermore, by
appealing to the entire world to come to the aid of the
suffering people of Biafra, the Joint Church Aid clearly stood out to accept the responsibilities of what it was doing. In every facet of politics, local, national, or international, there is always a negative side. The Joint Church Aid was well aware of this. By making its motives well known, the Joint Church Aid was more tolerable than the World Council of Churches, whose motives were still fraught with inconsistency; yet the World Council of Churches continued to supply Biafrans with massive food materials. This perhaps was the real politics of relief. However, it must be understood that the Joint Church Aid was a temporary agency set up to do one job whereas the World Council of Churches is a permanent organization with many activities thus making a difference in their outlook.

Protestants’ Internal Involvement--the World Council of Churches

Despite their fragmentation and different public pronouncements, nearly all of the Protestant relief operations which entered Biafra were distributed by the World Council of Churches/Biafra. Thus an analysis of the internal involvement of the Protestant churches in Biafra will concentrate on the activities of the World Council of Churches. Just as Caritas Internationalis representatives served in the distribution of Caritas Internationalis relief materials, some expatriates and some indigenous
workers known as Provincial Representatives supervised
the distribution of the World Council of Churches' and
other Protestant relief materials in Biafra.

Once the relief operations started in early 1968, the
World Council of Churches Biafran headquarters were
located at Awo Omama near Uli airstrip. In principle, the
distribution system involved the transporting of supplies
by Biafran Air Force escort which supplied both the
personnel to unload the aircraft and the lorries for road
transport. Once received at the central stores, supplies
were unloaded, sorted, and stored for the night, and
reloaded the next morning for distribution to the various
provincial stores on a percentage basis according to the
population of those provinces. Table XIX lists the refugee
relief provincial stores of the World Council of Churches
as of June 28, 1968.

As the war progressed and Biafra became compressed,
there were only a few Provincial stores in existence at
the end of the war—Owerri provincial stores which combined
Port Harcourt and Aba; Orlu which combined Okigwe and Oji
River; Umuahia which combined Umuahia 2 and part of Aba;
and Awka which combined Onitsha and continued to remain at
Nnewi. But because of logistical problems, there were no
clear-cut arrangements to ensure perfect geographical
divisions. However, trucks and lorries were still
TABLE XIX

LIST OF WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES REFUGEE RELIEF
PROVINCIAL STORES AS OF JUNE 28, 1968*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>CCB/WCC Representative**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awka</td>
<td>Oko</td>
<td>Miss Waddington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onitsha</td>
<td>Nnewi</td>
<td>Miss Carey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oji Rive and Okigwe</td>
<td>Okigwe</td>
<td>Mr. Carey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlu</td>
<td>Orlu</td>
<td>Rev. S.C.M. Ebo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>Egbu</td>
<td>Mr. R. M. Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umuahia (1)</td>
<td>Umuahia</td>
<td>Mr. Roe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umuahia (2)</td>
<td>Edda</td>
<td>Mr. Somerville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abakaliki</td>
<td>Afikpo Road</td>
<td>Mr. Cluness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aba and Annang</td>
<td>N. Ngwa Hospital</td>
<td>Mr. McGraw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Harcourt</td>
<td>Elele</td>
<td>Mr. S. Ijioma***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*After Nordchurchaid, op. cit., p. 107.

**Christian Council of Biafra and World Council of Churches.

***Of all these, only two were Nigerians.

allocated according to statistical data even if they were not reliable. Relief allocations from the central store were made accordingly.

Provincial stores were created to facilitate distribution to needy people. Rapidly changing military events
made it difficult to maintain these divisions for very long. For example, the Port Harcourt provincial store was moved twice before it was finally merged with Owerri provincial store. Similarly the Aba, Umuahia, Okigwe, and Oji River provincial stores were frequently moved according to the dictates of the war front situation.

Below the provincial stores were other divisional stores located most of the time at Protestant parsonages. The logic of this was that both military men and civilians would be slow in breaking into church premises.

From the provincial stores, the divisional stores were supplied with relief materials and money on scheduled days. For example, Owerri provincial stores were serving the following divisional stores at the end of the war in January, 1970—Ahiara, Atta, Akabo, Inyishi, Egbu, Okpuala, Ife, Ezinihitte, Imerienwe, and Akpoku. Depending on the number of refugee camps, sickbays, and the population of needy people, three to four lorry loads of food materials were dispatched to the divisional stores each week. They were accompanied by civilian escorts. When ambushing, hijacking, and other violent actions against these lorries
increased in rapidity and intensity, military escorts were provided.\textsuperscript{70}

From the divisional stores, officials of refugee camps—camp directors or camp wardens or both—received allocations every week according to the number of refugees in their camps. Those refugee camps to which external refugees were attached got more rations. In most cases the means of conveying food from divisional stores to refugee camps, sickbays, or feeding centers was by bicycles. This meant that while these relief materials were in transit between divisional stores and refugee camps, they were exposed to more dangers in the hands of marauding soldiers and villagers. In addition, pilfering was constant among refugee camp officials as well.

The method of dividing food in camps has already been discussed, but suffice it to say that the extended family system was an important factor in the distribution. It served as a unit of division. In some camps where refugees were in the thousands, distribution was made not on family

\textsuperscript{70}Osuji, op. cit. One of the examples of determined armed attacks on relief lorries was on September 20, 1969. A truck load of relief materials destined for Ezinihitte never made it back to the Egwu provincial store. Two days later it was discovered somewhere near Umuahia in a military zone with all the food materials gone. On inquiry, it was found out that the lorry was commandeered by soldiers for the use in moving troops, but what of the food?
units but on kindred or village units. Then the village heads or kindred heads made the distribution. Table XX shows the refugee relief in Biafra by the World Council of Churches as of September 30, 1969.

Given the fact that about 1,222,000 refugees were camped in 1,491 camps and that in total the World Council of Churches was feeding 1,656,300 people at this time, this means that a combination of both refugees housed and fed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Caritas Internationalis on the estimate would be about four million. If this figure is added to the number of people who were receiving supplies from either the provincial or divisional stores directly for various reasons, the total number of Biafrans receiving relief materials in fact would be very close to six million. Considering the fact that by September, 1969, the enclave had been about seven million in population, although some reports put the population of Biafra at this time at about five million, it followed that nearly 75 per cent of the population was dependent on relief materials. In fact, it would not be an over-statement to say that the entire population was dependent on relief materials. They were supplemented with locally produced foods which were, however, in short supply and in some areas non-existent.
TABLE XX
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES REFUGEE RELIEF IN BIAFRA
RETURNS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1969*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Camped Camps</th>
<th>Camped Refugees</th>
<th>Feeding Centers</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Sickbays Centers</th>
<th>Inpatients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annang</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>107,000</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>64,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aba</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72,000</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abia</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biafia/Edda</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>314,000</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oji River</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okigwi</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>117,000</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>37,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onitsha</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>76,000</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>94,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlu</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>89,000</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>31,000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owerri</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umuahia</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,491</td>
<td>1,222,000</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>427,000</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>7,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From Nordchurchaid Report, op. cit., p. 199.

Note: In addition to the camped refugees, approximately 300,000 uncamped refugees received relief supplies on a regularly scheduled basis. In addition to the sickbays, 23 hospitals with approximately 9,000 patients were supported jointly with other relief agencies. Overall, approximately 1,965,000 people were supported by the World Council of Churches.
Of the relief organizations distributing food in Biafra, the World Council of Churches gave more money than either of the other two. Each week as food materials were conveyed to the divisional stores, a lump sum of money was made available for corresponding allocations to the camps, sickbays, and feeding centers. These funds were used to pay for those food items that had to be bought locally. For example, every week, St. Charles refugee camp at Ogbor-Ihitteafoukwu received an equivalent of six hundred dollars. Since there were few refugee camps in the enclave more heavily populated than St. Charles camp, the average should have been about four hundred dollars.\(^71\)

Because of its system of distribution, the World Council of Churches hired more workers than either the ICRC or Caritas Internationalis. This meant, since workers were paid with relief items, according to their responsibilities, more materials were given out by the organization. For example, it was not uncommon for senior staff members at the Owerri provincial store to receive for their weekly ration one bag of rice (medium size), six giant size stockfish, six cups of salt, four tins of beef, and other rare food materials. At other provincial stores, ratios may be presumed to have approached the same

\(^{71}\)Ibid.
Owerri provincial store was notorious for giving out too much to its senior staff. These facts suggest the possibility that the World Council of Churches lost more food through pilfering, hijacking, and other illegitimate means than other relief organizations. If this is true, then the World Council of Churches was contributing to the feeding of both the civilian and military population of Biafra.

Conclusions

The accounts in this chapter have been undertaken in order to determine whether the behavior of the churches as transnational actors supported the hypotheses of this study. The following conclusions emerge.

1. Although there were millions of Christians in Biafra, there was nothing to support the first hypothesis of this study that the churches contributed to the outbreak of the conflict in Nigeria. It is possible that Ojukwu, Ibiam, and other Christian leaders in Biafra considered the possibility of attracting sympathy from foreign Christians, but they could not be sure of the reaction of these Christians. This assertion is supported by the fact that both the attempts to project the war as a religious war and as a war of genocide were dropped from the propaganda when Biafrans found that these efforts
were not paying off. In a word, churches as transnational actors did not contribute to the outbreak of the war.

2. On the second hypothesis of this study—that the churches as transnational actors attempted to influence the behavior of the conflicting parties in the conflict—two facts stand out in support. In their external and internal involvements both the Catholic and Protestant churches attempted to do so. First, the various early delegations to Biafra served as stimulants to Ojukwu and as warnings to Gowon. In each camp the delegations had different impacts. In Biafra the leadership and the generality of people hailed these delegations as de facto recognition of their state. They hoped that this would lead to eventual recognition by those states in which the leaders were predominantly Christian. One result was the European tour by Ibiam and the delegation which attended the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Similarly, the early visit of Johnson to Biafra as a representative of the World Council of Churches (even if he was on a private visit), influenced the Roman Catholic Church to send a hurried delegation to the Vatican to demand a visit by the Papal envoys.

On Lagos' side these church delegations to Biafra had a negative impact. It accounted for the toughening attitude of Gowon, particularly in doing everything possible
to prevent the Papal delegation from visiting Biafra.
Furthermore, the various public speeches, publications, and pronouncements by various church leaders and Christian organizations were not well received in Lagos and were responsible for bad publicity and adverse comments against them. For example, when the Pope and the Cardinal of Westminster spoke out against the war at various public appearances, there were demonstrations in Lagos. Radio Nigeria exploded with a furious attack saying:

Nigerian Christians of all schools of thought are sick and tired of ill-informed Christians and the partisan intervention of foreign church dignitaries in the Nigerian conflict. . . . Nigerian Christians must think deeply about the true meaning of the actions of foreign church dignitaries in the Nigerian conflict.  

Thus, the external behavior of the churches—Catholic and Protestant alike—tended to influence the parties differently, but most of the time they tended to have a positive influence in Biafra and a negative one in Nigeria.

Above all, the most visible result of transnational church activity on Ojukwu was in his hardening attitude. One senior army officer in Biafra during the war recalled,

We were told many times, and we believed it too, that as long as the Christian churches all over the world, including those in Britain, are in support of Biafra, nothing would make us

72 Kirk-Greene, op. cit., pp. 46-47.
lose the war. Our Chaplain stressed this point to us more and more often.  

Also Ojukwu was reported to have said in an interview with Stremlau that:

I was certain that the most Nigeria would do to the airlift was shoot down one or two planes. I was assured that the churches would continue to the end—all of them—no matter what. I was also sure the Red Cross would stop, but as long as I had the other two directions, it was all right.

Because of this belief and the confidence he had in the churches, his refusal to allow daylight flights manifested the importance of the churches to him. According to one State Department report, one of the reasons why Ojukwu bluntly refused to allow daylight flights was that it would endanger the churches' flights. If the daylight flights were allowed, only the ICRC flight would be permitted and the churches' flights would be excluded. Since Ojukwu relied more heavily on the churches, they received more consideration than did the Red Cross. In fact, what Nigeria wanted in the demand for daylight flights was, according to James Pope, "a mere symbolic touchdown" in Lagos before proceeding to Biafra. Since

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73 Interview, confidentiality requested and granted, Aba, December, 1978.
74 Interview, Ojukwu, cited in Stremlau, op. cit., p. 247.
75 Interview, James Pope, Public Affairs Officer, State Department, May 3, 1979, Washington, D.C.
this would exclude flights for the churches, daylight flights were out of the question as far as Ojukwu was concerned.

On the other hand, Ojukwu had said that his reasons for refusing the daylight flights were that Biafrans feared that the relief materials would be poisoned and that "Nigeria would have been free to bomb our alternative airstrip with impunity. We were fighting a war and I needed arms." Indeed, the first reason was a cover for the second reason which was the real one. By maintaining night flights, Ojukwu was able to get in arms flights between the relief flights. Former U. S. Senator Charles Goodell recalled that he witnessed these arms flights came into Uli. The point is that by accepting the continuation of night flights, the churches influenced his behavior in deciding not to permit daylight flights. This was a crucial issue throughout the war.

3. Considering the third hypothesis that the churches acting as relief agencies in Biafra prolonged the war, certain statements seem warranted. Both the Catholic and Protestant churches in their external involvement served as spokesmen for Biafra and Biafrans. Their public

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76 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 47.

77 Honorable Charles Goodell, Interview, May 1, 1979, Washington.
speeches and pronouncements, their publications and various commentaries in many European and American papers helped to produce sympathy for the enclave. There was no doubt that starvation in Biafra was real, though there may have been over-publicity by the church. In many instances the churches undertook to discuss the political and social impacts of the war—which was considered by some to be outside the domain of humanitarianism. The result of this publicity was to encourage more donations from foreign Christians.

This, in turn, meant more relief materials going into Biafra to support the population—refugees, civilians, and military men alike. As already indicated, there was abundant evidence that some of these relief materials were mishandled and a large quantity of them were found in

78 A publication by Time Life Books in July, 1969, depicted the condition of starving Biafrans. Horrible pictures of dying children with protruding stomachs, and men and women looking like "living skeletons" were vivid. This publication more than anything else won Biafrans more sympathizers. It provided the churches evidence for greater appeals and publicity on behalf of Biafra. Time Life Magazine, Biafran Journal (New York, 1969).

79 See a release made by Catholic Relief Services--U.S.C.C. In this article, entitled "Children's War," Father Doran, an Irish Holy Ghost missionary, discussed the implications of the war and the fate of Ibos in Nigeria after the war. Also see "Biafra, a Special Report by the Holy Ghose Father," Washington, 1969.
markets. Testifying before a Congressional hearing, Clyde Ferguson had this to say:

Now, on the question of black market, I saw no organized black market. There is pilferage. I, myself, am unconcerned with it. I know that a certain number of bags get diverted out of the relief streams. Some of these show up in the market. It is clear every once in a while that somebody made five or six bottles of beer on such supplies, but it didn't concern me because I knew that it was going to be consumed, that people would in fact eat it. I felt about it the way I used to feel about law students who stole a book. If, in fact, and despite the fact they committed an offense, they wanted the use of that book badly enough to steal it, then I could justify it, though officially I could not condone it. [Ferguson was and is still a Law Professor.]

There is some loss through pilferage on both sides of the line. There is also loss, unfortunately, which takes place simply because of ignorance of basic logistical techniques of warehousing, storage, and the like.80

In any case, the relief materials were sustaining the Biafran people. There is an African proverb, "one does not fight with an empty stomach." Feeding the Biafran population was significant in prolonging the war. For one thing, it prevented internal civilian revolt.

At the beginning of the war enthusiasm among the Biafran population to join the army was high. As defeat upon defeat attended military efforts in all fronts, as more and more casualties were suffered and as hunger and

starvation took their toll on the population, this enthusiasm went down. The Biafran authorities were running out of manpower. Conscription was instituted and since only able-bodied men were conscripted and at that time more able-bodied men were found working at relief centers because they had more to eat, it followed that as the relief organizations made people healthy, they also made them conscription-worthy. By implication, they were prolonging the war. For sure, if Biafra had run out of manpower earlier, it would have collapsed earlier than it did.

Perhaps the support to Biafra which helped most to prolong the war was in the provision of hard currency to Biafran authorities by the church organizations, particularly the World Council of Churches. Ojukwu confirmed this. For example,

When asked how Biafra managed to survive through the dark days of battle in July and August, 1968, Ojukwu named three factors: the logistical advantages that permitted him to concentrate his limited fire power; the difficulties that the Nigerian high command experienced in resupplying its own forces for a final advance; and the financial aid he received from the churches and other relief agencies. Regarding the latter, he added, "the only source of income available to Biafra was the hard currency spent by the churches for yams and gari. That's all. At this stage we had no loans or anything else. It wasn't much, but enough to sustain us."81

81 Stremlau, op. cit., p. 239.
Although Ojukwu said this financial assistance was not enough, it was, in fact, substantial. Given the military situation at that time, no amount of financial assistance would have been considered enough by the Biafran leadership. Kennedy Lindsay wrote on this matter, saying:

.. During 1968 missionary organizations spent about £440,000 locally within Biafra on various projects and undertakings. In addition, there was an average of 250 missionaries of all denominations who are likely to have spent locally from their salaries and allowances a minimum of £1,500 each or a total of £350,000. Altogether missionary organizations and missionaries spent locally in Biafra £815,000 and they are certain to maintain at least that level of spending throughout 1969. During October to December, 1968, Caritas had a budget of $1.5 million in Biafran operations. Caritas plans to increase this level of spending 1969 which would mean an expenditure within Biafra over the year of at least £1,178,400. At the moment Caritas is responsible for one-third of the relief work inside Biafra and so total expenditures inside Biafra of the relief organizations is likely to be at least £3,535,300.82

Still in the area of military operations, the relief organizations, particularly the World Council of Churches and the Joint Church Aid, spent a substantial amount of money improving and upgrading facilities at the Uli airstrip. For example,

To improve operating conditions at Uli airstrip, the relief organizations quickly undertook several major initiatives. On September 28, 1968, they imported 30,000 square feet of aluminum

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planking worth $220,000 to surface a new parking area and widen the taxiway to accommodate the larger DC-7C and 1049-H Super Constellations. The World Council of Churches contracted for the building of dirt feeder roads and several other improvements in the parking and off-loading areas. In addition, the four Nordic church organizations provided for a greater sophistication in air traffic technology available to Biafran air force controllers at Uli, including landing lights to replace the kerosene flares, $30,000 worth of radio equipment, a stand-by generator, high-intensity fog lamps, a $20,000 direction finder, and other navigational equipment.\(^8^3\)

Since the relief organizations were well aware that Biafra was using this as a military airstrip, they knew that their helping to improve the airstrip constituted a substantial assistance to the Biafran military operations.

4. On the fourth hypothesis of this study—that the Protestant churches as a group in the Nigerian civil war served as instruments of conflict resolution—the evidence is not strong, but some of it could be interpreted as giving modest support. For example, Reverend Johnson's visit to Lagos and his conversations as reported in Wiseberg genuinely meant a serious attempt to resolve the conflict through peaceful means.

In most of their pronouncements, the Protestant churches through their principal relief agency, the World Council of Churches, reiterated their determination to

\(^8^3\) Stremlau, op. cit., p. 243. Also see Nordchurchaid Report, Appendix 9.
assist in any way possible to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict. For example, the statement issued by the World Council of Churches on August 26 in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church deploring the action of the British government in supplying arms to the federal military government was an act of good faith in seeking conflict resolution.

Furthermore, the operations mounted by the relief agencies, the attention given to the starving Biafran children and women and the publicity campaign mounted by the Catholic and Protestant churches caused the world to focus attention on the conflict. It is possible that this world attention caused Nigerian authorities once the war ended, to treat Biafran rebels with magnanimity and compassion. It is possible that in the absence of these efforts by the Christian churches, the story might have been different in Nigeria after the war. It must be pointed out that in the final analysis the churches never succeeded in bringing about conflict resolution. Since the federal government was determined to preserve the unity of the country, and since as time went on it was winning the war, it would not negotiate with Biafra. Organizations like the churches could not do much to help resolve the conflict unless there were negotiations, which of course,
never occurred. From this standpoint, the main instrument of conflict resolution was the Nigerian federal army.

Moreover, since it was not clear on the basis of this study what motivated Gowon to grant general amnesty to all Biafrans at the end of the war (it could have been the pressures from the churches or because of his determination to reduce the internal bitterness in the country in order to promote unity), the point must be made that any conclusion that humanitarian organizations served as instruments of conflict resolution rests on a shaky ground and, therefore, cannot be stretched too far.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Shell-BP and AGIP Oil Companies As Actors

Preceding chapters have attempted to draw some conclusions regarding the hypotheses of this study. Those conclusions will now be summarized. The central issue of the study—the theoretical perspective of transnational action in the light of the behaviors of these actors—will then be confronted. In doing this, it will be possible to pose some relevant questions whose answers, it is hoped, will lie in future research.

In drawing the conclusions in Chapter II, the point was made that Shell-BP by implication contributed to the outbreak of the war in Nigeria. Evidence attending to this conclusion is that the company did not take a firm stand initially once it was clear to them that the conflicting leadership in Biafra and Nigeria were courting the company; that is, each was banking on the company's support in the impending war. It was suggested that if the company had taken a firm stand in favor of Nigeria, Ojukwu probably would have considered his options, and may not have embarked on the costly venture of secession.
It was clear that Stanley Gray delivered a note to Ojukwu and promised that the company would pay his regime the oil royalties due. Although he stated after his release that the note was written and delivered under duress, Gray and his company initially behaved in a favorable manner towards Ojukwu and Biafra. Before acting, the company apparently did not calculate the political and military risks that might follow their action. Shell-BP was exhibiting behavior typical of multinational business enterprises when they are confronted with the power of nation-states--that is, according to Rummel and Heenan, placing undue importance on dramatic events. There is a tendency for multinational chief executives to be overly influenced "by periodic swells of optimism or pessimism and hence, swing from one potentially costly decision to another by sporadic events."¹

Apparently Gray did not take the overall political and military consequences into consideration when his mind was free of pressures from both sides. By reacting to pressures from Ojukwu and Gowon, and apparently misled by the air of optimism prevalent in the Eastern Region, Gray wrote his note and promised to make the payment, but

as he found out later, other pressures surfaced. These included the blockade by the federal government, the military outcome, and pressure from the British government. This point was strengthened by an article in The Guardian, which said:

The oil companies first decided to treat secession as a "force gesture"—and pay royalties to the Biafrans. But there were rapid second thoughts—apparently brought about by the official British calculations based on reports from Lagos, that the Federal side was sure to win a quick and easy victory.\(^2\)

Unfortunately, a quick and easy victory did not come. What finally came after thirty months of war was a costly victory.

Thus, Gray was a victim of sparodic reaction. Ojukwu must have carefully observed this in him, hence he ordered the arrest and detention of Gray. Although Ojukwu contended that "the oil companies were neither consulted nor considered in making the decision," for the secession of Biafra, he pointed out also that, "naturally, once the decision was made, oil became an important asset to be protected and if possible put to service . . . ."\(^3\)

As previously indicated, the military situation dictated the pattern of diplomatic settings and maneuvers.

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\(^3\)A letter from General Ojukwu to the author, op. cit.
Since these developments were in favor of Nigeria, Shell-BP decided to pay Nigerian, not Biafra. By this action, Shell-BP triggered reactions from both sides. The promise to pay Biafra may have hastened its secession. It also angered Nigeria, which extended the blockade of Biafra to oil tankers. It also touched off a series of diplomatic moves. Then the delay of payment and then finally nonpayment to Biafra influenced Ojukwu's hostile actions against the company.

Having finally decided to support the Nigerian side by paying the oil royalties, Shell-BP was anxious to resume operations. According to the *London Times* of May 20, 1968, two days after Port Harcourt had fallen to the federal troops the company expressed "guarded optimism about restarting the flow of oil from Biafra." This optimism was justified when the company, before the end of the year, resumed oil production and exports in Biafran territory. As already demonstrated in Tables X and XI, once the company resumed production, oil exports from Nigeria, which hitherto had been at the lowest level since the war, gradually started to pick up. Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings correspondingly went up as well. This enabled Nigeria to increase her purchases of arms for

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the war. Since Biafran fighting tenacity was strong, what emerged was matching arms with zeal. The overall result of this was the prolongation of the war.

The conflict was resolved, therefore, not in a peaceful way, but by military means. By building up Nigeria's foreign exchange, Shell-BP, after helping to prolong the war, served as an instrument of conflict resolution only through its financial support of Nigeria military actions.

On their part, the AGIP oil company has been described as an unwilling transnational actor in the civil war. There are two reasons for this. First, the company happened to be prospecting for oil in a hotly contested region of the Mid-west. Second, the company did not withdraw from the areas when war broke out.

The raid by the Biafran soldiers on AGIP's location in Kwale should not be regarded as surprising. By remaining in a military area, the company by implication had assumed the risks of war. By prospecting for oil at this period of the war, the company, like Shell-BP, contributed substantially to the war effort of Nigeria. They, therefore, invited Biafran raids.

On the question of payment of ransom to the Biafran authorities for the release of the captured oil men, evidence presented here does not seem to substantiate the fact. Although it was a general conception that
something must have been paid to the Biafran authorities in this regard, it is only proper to state that if this payment was indeed made, it helped Biafra to survive at least for sometime.⁵

In general, the case against Shell-BP could be made equally against the AGIP oil company with the exception that the AGIP company was a victim of precipitated reaction. However, it must be stressed that although both Shell-BP and AGIP influenced the behavior of the conflicting leaderships, the level of their influence cannot be determined without further inquiry. Therefore, any case made against them here must be regarded as not very conclusive.

The Humanitarian Actors

The humanitarian organizations—the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the World Council of Churches, Caritas Internationalis, and the Joint Church Aid—present different problems. The result was the same in some cases. It is not clear if Ojukwu included among his options the possibility of attracting humanitarian aid

⁵There was also a negative result of the issue to Biafrans. As already shown, international public opinion was hostile to the killing of the oil men and this cost Biafra much world support. Most important to the analytical question of this inquiry is that the raid might have yielded Biafrans a large sum of money as ransom. This, as pointed out above, is merely speculative.
from the ICRC; if he did, this was not an important factor in his decision to secede. As a Catholic, and knowing that Biafra was predominantly Christian, he may have calculated the possible support from both churches before secession. If he did, he was right. It is part of the conclusion of this study that the Catholic and Protestant churches influenced the outbreak of the civil war. It must be stressed that this conclusion is open to question.

A more direct involvement came in the action of both the ICRC and the churches in undertaking the flights into Biafra, thus violating Nigerian airspace. Much evidence supports the contention that Nigerian authorities acquiesced in these flights. Once the war assumed a greater magnitude, however, they did not want them to continue. From time to time, the relief organizations continued to supply Biafra with relief materials. These actions probably influenced Ojukwu's behavior in rejecting the opening of daylight flights into his territory or the allowing of sea and land corridors.

The ICRC withdrew from the airlift in June, 1969. The cost of its involvement had been high; its plane was shot down by the Nigerian Air Force. This incident did not deter the churches. Their stubborn attitude continued until the last gun was fired on January 10, 1970. Ojukwu
counted on the churches' continued support, as he indicated to Stremlau, and his view turned out to be correct.

Evidently, by airlifting relief materials and by producing substantial amounts of hard currency for the Biafran authorities, the churches prolonged the war individually and collectively in the name of humanitarianism. By the same token, because they helped to focus world attention on the Nigerian civil war, they served to a point as instruments of conflict resolution. On the whole, they accepted the political implications of their actions. In the words of James Bond, what to the churches was humanitarianism became to other political maneuvering.6

The conclusions outlined at the end of the last three chapters of this study have been summarized. Although most of the data presented supported the hypotheses, it must be admitted that the data yielded some mixed results. That is, the level of involvement and the implications were varied. With these mixed results, there are mixed conclusions in this study. This point of mixed impact will become clearer once the question of the theoretical perspective of this study is confronted.

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First, in Chapter II the conclusion was made that by implications the oil companies contributed to the outbreak of the conflict because both Ojukwu and Gowon must have calculated on the importance of the oil royalties and subsequent earnings from the oil products. However, material presented so far do not reveal conclusively that both Gowon and Ojukwu actually regarded oil revenue to be very crucial. Apparently, something more than the oil revenue must have influenced their behavior.

Second, most of the material in these chapters give good support to the second hypothesis that humanitarian actors did influence the behavior of the two sides. However, it is proper to point out that the churches and the ICRC wanted the war to end at once through a peaceful negotiation, but their influence to bring this about was zero.

Third, it has been said that the transnational actors studied here helped to prolong the war. This must be qualified. As far as this conclusion affects the oil companies, the evidence is indeed not very strong and must be admitted. As it affects the churches in particular, as far as they continued to run federal blockade, they were thwarting the purpose of the blockade—which was mounted in order to shorten the war. They did prolong the war,
and it is understandable that they had trouble with the
Nigerian government.

Fourth, it has been said over and over again that all
the humanitarian organizations studied here wanted the
war to end as soon as possible, though they had different
reasons. The ICRC and the churches wanted to help, or
were certainly willing to help, to resolve the conflict.
There is little or no evidence to support any strong
conclusion that they did so help, although evidence was
shown here to support the view that they did attempt to
resolve the conflict. Any conclusion here that any of their
actions had the implication of serving as conflict resolution
must be seen as very tentative. After all, their willing-
ness to do something which they were not able to do, does
not necessarily mean that they did it.

Theoretical Perspectives

Before confronting the theoretical questions, a few
preliminary statements must be made. Scholars in the
field of international politics in the recent past have been
debating the question of whether, in view of the changing
realities of world politics today, the traditional state-
centric view of international actors is still valid or
whether it should be replaced by a more general empirical
formulation which broadens the scope to include
transnational actors. These include such entities as multinational business corporations, trade union organizations, revolutionary movements, and other powerful units which are nongovernmental both in structure and in action, but have appeared on the chess board of international politics wielding enormous influence. The state-centric view dominated the thinking in the field for many years. After World War II this view was challenged. Samuel Huntington has outlined four reasons. They are as follows.

1. Transnational organizations and consequently transnational interactions have proliferated in number far beyond anything remotely existing in the past;

2. Individually the organizations grew in size far beyond anything existing in the past;

3. They performed functions which they never performed in the past; and

4. They operated on a truly global scale such as was never possible in the past.

Thus, "the increase in the number, size, scope, and variety of transnational organizations after World War II makes it

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possible, useful, and sensible to speak of transnational organizational revolution in world politics.  

As a point of entry to this discussion, Arnold Wolfers' paradigm will be appropriate because he recognized the validity of two views. However, while recognizing the new reaction which regards individuals and corporate bodies as having power to influence the course of international politics, Wolfers was not prepared to admit that this new approach should replace the traditional one. This is clear when he wrote:

A comprehensive theory does not call for a division of international politics into two compartments, one comprising the realm of the state as the actor in power politics, the other the realm of the human actors, the masses of common men with their psychological trait on their pursuit of human purposes. Instead, all events occurring in the international arena must be conceived of and understood from two angles simultaneously; one calling for concentration on the behavior of states as organized bodies of men, the other calling for concentration of human beings upon whose psychological reactions the behavior credited to states ultimately rests.

What Wolfers wrote was an expression of awareness of the existence of the corporate bodies and individuals. He


9 Arnold Wolfers, Discord and Collaboration (Baltimore, 1962, p. 9.)
regards their actions as being accountable to the state because he believes that

To nation-states were ascribed the acts that accounted for changes in the distribution of power, for alignments and counter-alignments, for expansion and colonial conquest, for war and peace—the chief events of international affairs whenever a multitude of sovereigns have been in contact with one another.\(^{10}\)

He warned against merely pointing to "the impressive array of international and other non-national organizations that have mushroomed in recent years" and regarding them as being capable of affecting the course of international politics. This, according to Wolfers, is not enough.

Wolfers admitted that from time to time in international politics some corporate bodies such as the United Nations and its agencies, the European Coal and Steel Community, the Afro-Asian bloc, the Arab League, the Vatican, and a host of nonstate entities are able to affect the course of international politics. He thinks, however, that "their ability to operate as international or transnational actors may be traced to the fact that men identify themselves and their interests with corporate bodies other than the nation-state."\(^{11}\)

It appears that what Wolfers did was to identify a problem without treating it. He recognized the need for a

\(^{10}\)Ibid., p. 4. \(^{11}\)Ibid, p. 23.
shift from the state-centric view to a more general conceptual framework which could enable scholars to analyze the activities performed in international politics—not only performed by states but also those performed by individuals and corporate bodies who at times can affect the course of international politics.

However, Wolfers' efforts stimulated academic interest in this regard. Robert O. Keohane and Joseph Nye, with many other scholars, confronted this problem head-on. They came up with a "world politics" paradigm which should begin to enable scholars to analyze international political activities. In other words, Keohane and Nye's formulation helped to give scholars insight into both empirical and normative questions of world actors not solely based on the state-centric but which is also based on the reality of world phenomena.\(^\text{12}\)

Although Keohane and Nye raised more questions than could be answered in several volumes, some of the questions they raised are strikingly relevant to the Nigerian civil war. These questions will be treated here in order to attempt to offer a theoretical explanation of the various transnational actions. These questions are as follows.

1. Is the state-centric view, which focuses on the interstate system, an adequate analytical framework for the investigation of contemporary reality?

2. What seems to be the effect of transnational relations on the abilities of governments to deal with their environments?

3. To what extent and how have governments suffered from a "loss of control" as a result of transnational relations?

Before treating these questions in the context of the Nigerian civil war, it is necessary to recall the definition of transnational organization adopted in this study and spelled out earlier. The broader definition of "transnational organization" as given by Keohane and Nye is preferred over the restrictive and narrow definition of the term as given by Huntington.\(^\text{13}\)

For Keohane and Nye "transnational organization" should include "multinational business enterprises, revolutionary movements, trade unions, scientific networks, international air transport cartels, and communications activities in outer space."\(^\text{14}\) In this broad definition the two scholars make two important distinctions between inter-state interactions which are conventional interactions among

\(^{13}\) Huntington, op. cit., p. 334.

\(^{14}\) Keohane and Nye, op. cit., p. xi.
states and non-governmental interactions which they regard as "transnational interactions." For them, "transnational interactions describe a movement of tangible or intangible items across state boundaries when at least one actor is not an agent of a government or an inter-governmental organization." In their view it does not matter whether the second actor is, therefore, a multinational corporation like Shell-BP, or Gulf Oil Company, or a humanitarian organization like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) or World Council of Churches, provided the transnational activities are maintained across state boundaries and that they involve movement of tangible and intangible items.

Huntington's restrictive definition regards transnational organization as including both governmental and nongovernmental organizations designed to facilitate the pursuit of a single interest within many national units. Crucial to Huntington's definition is the distinction between international and transnational organizations. The difference is that the former requires accord among nations; whereas the latter requires access to nations.

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15 Ibid.

Underscoring this distinction, Huntington wrote, "these two needs, accord and access, neatly summarize the differences between the two phenomena."\(^{17}\)

In adopting Keohane and Nye's definition for this study, greater room is allowed the various phenomena which have been identified in this study as having taken an active part in the Nigerian civil war. For example, the access and accord stance would not apply in this case because neither the World Council of Churches, nor the Caritas Internationalis was granted access into Biafra by the Nigerian government. With this brief explanation of definitions, it is proper now to return to the discussion of the broad analytical questions of this section of the study.

1. Is the state-centric view, which focuses on the interstate system, an adequate analytical framework for the investigation of contemporary reality? The importance of states as the central actors in international politics is well recognized. States have independent action and their control is limited by both external and internal factors. Yet, they perform acts on behalf of their societies in whatever form they deem necessary. For example, writing on the importance of states, Burton said,

\[
\text{State authorities have power to control the operations of system, and a limited power to}
\]

\(^{17}\text{Ibid, p. 336.}\)
control the environment in which they operate. Some of this power is derived independently from resources and systems under their direct control; some is derived from the systems they create.\textsuperscript{16}

Expanding this contention, Edward Mose asserted that one assumption has been to regard states and relations between them alone as central to total world society. By so doing, the contemporary flow of ideas, universal changes in values, the influence of technological advances, and the widespread activities of commercial enterprises, have been treated as separate phenomena, to be noted in passing, because they could not readily be examined within this traditional framework.\textsuperscript{19}

To accept the assumption that states are the sole actors relevant to international politics is to ignore these increasing new phenomena. They should not be treated in passing; rather they should be recognized and accepted as parts of the changing reality of the world. In fact, states as actors do not operate with empty hands. They must be equipped with political instruments in the form of economic resources, technological facilities, commercial values, finance, loans, and educational facilities; in short, all ingredients of a modernized society must be present in the states. No state can successfully maintain diplomatic, cultural, or social interactions with other


states without this array of mundane materials. As often happens, corporate bodies such as multinational business corporations, particularly the giants like IBM, General Motors, the Ford Foundation, and the Catholic Church, are few of these new phenomena.

Writing on the subject of transnational economic processes, Edward L. Morse argued that

The central position of economic activities in transnational processes has been reinforced by the more recent revolution in nuclear technology and its impact on international affairs. As a result of the development of nuclear technology, traditional foreign policy goals involving territorial accretion have become so politically and economically costly as to be virtually prohibitive. The well-known paradox of the inutility of force in the relations of those states which have been stalemated by the "balance of terror" has made it possible for international economic activities to increase tremendously in political significance. As the use of traditional instruments of force has receded in importance, play for power and position subsequently have appeared in the international monetary and commercial systems.  

A few examples will be given to illustrate this quotation in the context of the Nigerian civil war. Both Nigeria and Biafra needed all the internal and external resources they could muster for the successful prosecution of the war. Shell-BP paid oil royalties which were a center of international conflict for a while; AGIP paid

\[ \text{Ibid.} \]
taxes and royalties to Nigeria and may have paid ransom money to Biafra; the ICRC moved in relief materials collected from all over the world; both the Catholic and Protestant churches supplied information and communication machinery in addition to supplying men and materials in aid of Biafra—in short tangible and intangible items in large quantities were moved across the boundaries into these two conflicting nations.

The transnational activities performed by these actors were not those of nation-state systems. Yet they posed a threat to the security of Nigeria, and not supplying the goods hastened the demise of the Biafran "nation." With this network of activities nation-state actors were indirectly involved, including the British and American governments. Yet, if one reviews the list of major transnational actors, one will not find any of the actors involved in the civil war as among the world's richest and most powerful corporate bodies.

The question is, then, can scholars and practitioners in international relations afford to ignore these phenomena and persist in the traditional states-as-actors conception? To do so is to refuse to accept the emergence of autonomous actors with private foreign policies of their own that may impinge on state policies. This point will be illustrated in a discussion on the second theoretical question.
2. What seems to be the effect of transnational relations on the abilities of governments to deal with their environments? Different environments exist in different political settings. These environments may include religious, social, political, cultural, economic, and population factors. In general, it may include those things that are culturally intertwined, socially integrated, and economically unified which are constantly prevalent at one time or another in a political system. Such things as secondary groups as identified by J. David Singer, like trade unions, industrial-commercial associations, banking and investment institutions, professional societies, avocational groups, ethnic, ideological, and religious organizations may help to set the pattern of the environment, which may have interactions with transnational actors.21

In themselves environmental factors as outlined above may limit the ability of state authorities in various ways in both domestic and foreign policy matters. These may be compounded when they interact with transnational actors. In the course of interactions with transnational actors that possess rich political and economic resources, governments

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are often faced with the problem of control, and in the extreme cases direct confrontations may result.

This inter-play can be seen easily in the context of the Nigerian civil war. Although to a degree Biafra achieved de facto recognition (and with Tanzania, Zambia, the Ivory Coast, and Gabon both de facto and de jure recognition), from the Nigerian perspective it was still a part of the Nigerian nation. The ethnic heterogeneity in the country was one of the factors that triggered the outbreak of the civil war. The religious configuration of the people of Eastern Nigeria evoked world-wide sympathy from religious groups. The Biafrans attempted to exploit these two factors to their benefit. These factors are regarded as local environment which interacted with the transnational actors--World Council of Churches, Caritas Internationalis, and Joint Church Aid. These actors moved both tangible and intangible items; money, materials, and other relief needs into Biafra. They mounted stubborn airlifts on behalf of the Biafrans in the name of humanitarianism.

The impact of these activities clearly inhibited the Nigerian government's ability to crush the rebellion for a considerable number of months. In effect they created not only a control gap but also a legitimacy gap; hence, Biafra struggled on for thirty months. Most of the
resources expended by these transnational actors were donated from all over the world, but this does not minimize the importance of their actions. After all, they were able to mount a transnational campaign to raise money and receive donations from these operations which substantially confirmed their transnational efficacy.

What is more important is that by interacting with the Biafran people, they created problems for the Nigerian authorities. In a way they affected Nigeria's internal and external politics by altering the choices open to Gowon and the costs which he bore for adopting various courses of action to deal with the situations.

In the course of the civil war, the Nigerian government was faced with different problems of the war—problems caused or compounded by the transnational actors. To deal with each of these problems, the Nigerian government had to re-examine its options, analyze the problems, and come up with solutions. Yet, these problems continued to multiply and never ended until the war was over. To a point it was clear that the Nigerian government could not deal with its environment during the war and that this had resulted in a net loss of authority to these transnational actors. This brings this discussion to the third question raised here.
3. To what extent and how have governments suffered from a "loss of control as a result of transnational relations?" This question is interwoven with the question of environmental control. Strictly speaking, inability to deal with environmental factors does not necessarily mean loss of control, but a continuous inability might result in a loss of authority by a particular government at a given time.

For example, the transnational actors in the civil war, because of the enormous power they possess in terms of economic and material resources, supported the Biafran region strongly from a humanitarian perspective. The concomitants of this support were dangerous to the existence of Nigeria as a state. As has already been suggested, if the oil companies had not resumed production and thereby increased Nigeria's financial capabilities, she might have lost the war—not as a result of Biafran fire power, but as a result of Biafran interactions with the transnational actors, or Nigeria might still have won, but with the war being prolonged.

The assertion here is that transnational organizations in effect may cause states some loss of authority. In extreme cases, they may challenge the sovereignty of a state. As stated by Vernon:
... in any projection of the future interplay between sovereign states and multinational corporate groups, it would be unwise to underestimate the force and the persistence of national hostilities toward the extranational intrusions epitomized by those groups. Yet, it would be just as unwise to assume that such groups will inevitably be restricted and contained by national sovereigns.  

One related point needs to be made. It has been suggested that in direct confrontations with transnational actors, governments generally prevail. This is the view of Robert Gilpin—a strong proponent of the state-centric view. Keohane and Nye have argued, however, that although the government may win, in effect "winning may be costly, even for governments."  

The Nigerian case offers some illustrative facts. When Nigeria blockaded Biafra, direct confrontation with Shell-BP and other oil companies was a possibility. This did not come about partly because of British diplomatic maneuvers. Suffice it to say that if the oil companies had decided to run the blockade, they probably could have mustered more sophisticated means than Nigeria had, but this in the end would have cost them loss of the concessions.

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24Ibid., p. 372.
However, the most illustrative case was Ojukwu's confrontation with Shell-BP. As has been shown, Ojukwu prevailed and Shell-BP's high officials left the region, refused to pay the royalties, and consequently transferred their support to Nigeria.

Similarly, the ICRC persisted in running the blockade. The political and resources costs to Nigeria were substantial. They included international condemnation and refusal by many countries and individuals to donate money to be used on the Nigerian side.

It may be argued that since there is loss to either the transnational actor or the government in a direct confrontation, the best approach would be to avoid it. Conclusions on this aspect of "world political paradigm" must await further research. The eminent authors Keonane and Nye have recognized this fact; hence, they suggest that the formation of alliance is the best approach to this.

Comparative Transnational Behaviors

All the transnational actors whose activities in the Nigerian civil war are the subject of this study--the two oil companies and all the humanitarian organizations--presented different sets of behaviors. This warrants some discussion.
Shell-BP and AGIP as multinational corporations of a transnational nature were in the oil business—exporting and selling. Their central motive was to make a profit. Once the war started and presented them with choices, they reacted according to the situation. This has led Jack N. Behrman to observe that

On the whole the multinational company will try to decide what is good for the company and then fit its explanation of what it is doing to the expressed objectives of each government. It rationalizes what it is doing as "good for the government and country; not publicizing some of the things it is doing about which public officials might have some doubts."^25

Thus, Shell-BP's promise to pay the oil royalties to Ojukwu when he pressured the company officials, the company's refusal to pay when its officials were out of Biafra, the company's payment of the royalties to Lagos when it was clear that the Nigerian side was going to win, and AGIP's apparent decision to pay ransom to Ojukwu in order to secure the release of its eighteen workers in Biafran detention point to the same conclusion. Multinational corporations as transnational actors had one objective: to work for the interest of the company. To them, profit is as important as security is to a country.

A classic example of different behavioral patterns by transnational actors is the behavior of the ICRC. Its objective seemed to be clouded. It did not seem to have a defined policy. Although Lindt demonstrated at times some evidence of "humanitarian revolution," he was unable to maintain consistency in this regard. The ICRC operation was besieged with maladministration, internal conflict, and argument. It is, in fact, difficult to pin down the ICRC operation in Nigeria and Biafra to a definite set of behavioral patterns.

As transnational actors, the churches had an objective that was clear—to continue supporting Biafran war victims at all costs. Although the World Council of Churches often presented two faces in order to maintain good relations with the Nigerian side, Joint Church Aid and Caritas Internationalis were not so constrained, but were determined and effective. They confronted the Nigerian government with a challenge that it was not able to accept or reject ultimately.

The point stressed here is that transnational actors must exhibit a set of behavior patterns which is not constant, since it is dependent on local environments. The ability of any transnational actor to adjust its behavior pattern in response to the local environment will determine its relationship with the state authorities.
It would be inappropriate to prescribe one conceptual framework to analyze these transnational behaviors. Similarly, because these transnational actors have presented state authorities with various problems and have grown in influence and power, the state-centric model as a framework for the analysis of international relations is indeed not adequate. On the other hand, it is extreme to suggest that in the future these transnational actors, particularly the multinational business enterprise, will supplant nation-states as actors in international politics. Rather, it is more accurate to state that as the influence and powers of transnational actors increase, nation-state systems will continue to adjust their own behavior in order to properly deal with these actors. They have several options. They may refuse granting access; they may tighten up immigration regulations; they may prescribe tougher trade, economic, social, and communication laws; and above all, they may openly and bluntly refuse them entry. For example, Nigeria did this during the civil war. After the confrontation with Shell-BP over the payment of the oil royalties was over, Nigerian authorities enacted the Company's Control Decrees and also established the Nigerian National Oil Corporation, to control future objectional behavior by multinationals in the country.
Since both actors—states and transnationals—are aware of the weaknesses of the other, the use of coalitions as a way to resolve direct confrontation becomes more important than scholars have recognized. Particularly since no one wins the direct confrontation absolutely, there is always a need to compromise. The level of compromise and the extent to which it resolves direct confrontation must be determined in individual cases which cannot be explained by a simple typology.

Perhaps it is time to discuss some weaknesses in this study. One of these is the time lag since the Nigerian civil war. A war that took place between 1967 and 1970 has assumed the status of history, particularly among Nigerians. They are anxious to forget about it and all that it represented. Because of the bitterness that attended the war, remembering it brings a bitter memory to many, because of tribal affiliation or cultural values. The result is that many people are not prepared to discuss it with a student. Others in high places with scholarly interest prefer not to talk of it, except in general terms. In Europe and in the United States, many of those who actively participated in the war have moved several times. Thus, only a negligible proportion can be located. Some of those in this group who are willing to talk assert that they have lost every memory of the war.
The result is that data for this study depended heavily on the documents—government publications (Nigerian, Biafran, British, and the United States), newspaper commentaries, publications and editorials, and press releases of the transnational actors involved. These were supplemented with the few interviews that were conducted, and with the author's war-time diary. This brings up another weakness.

That is the question of bias. The Nigerian conflict, though a civil war by location and combatants, assumed an international dimension in terms of issues that were involved. Propaganda for the war was extensive and intensive. The result was that people took stands in favor of or against Nigeria without clearly understanding the issues that were involved. Once having taken a position, their public statements, newspaper reporting, or Congressional or Parliamentary debates were affected. All these make it difficult to assess these information sources.

Another point is one which perhaps affects the overall nature of this study. That is personal bias. As one who witnessed the war from one side, from the beginning to the end, the writer made a personal judgment, and this may have affected some of the conclusions and propositions made in this study. However, in the process of writing this, there was a constant awareness that one of the measures
of excellent scholarship is objectivity. With this as a check, the element of personal bias has been neutralized insofar as it is possible for one to do for oneself.

Yet, most of the propositions and conclusions arrived at here are open to challenge. In part, this is because they are based on one case study and not on a comparative study of civil wars. The result is that there is a tendency towards what might be termed "narrow gauge conclusions." However, these propositions and conclusions still stand because, given the same environmental factors and similar political settings, the behavior of these transnational actors are likely to repeat.

It must be mentioned that despite this and previous studies made on the Nigerian civil war, there are several areas of the war that need further research. Such areas as casualties, logistics, group activities, mercenary participation, and their sociological impact on the Nigerian tribal setting, and above all, a study on how this war has affected the post-Nigerian nation, are just a few of the many areas in which more research can be done. It is, therefore, hoped that this dissertation will pose a challenge which will result in further active scholarship.
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