

July 18, 1968

Morris B. Abram
Marc H. Tanenbaum

Biafran Aid

I have just spoken with Msgr. Landi, Assistant Director of Catholic Relief Services, second-in-command to Bishop Swanstrom. He shared with me the following information:

- 1) Catholic Relief Services would greatly welcome a Jewish involvement in providing aid to the victims of the Nigerian-Biafran Civil War. CRS is now meeting with Father Byrne, an Irish priest who has just come from Santome, the Portuguese island which is a collection station for food and medical supplies. Father Byrne reports that food that is sent by airlift to Santome is not piling up; it is being sent by airlift into Biafra. The air shipments that have been sent to the Spanish island Ferdinand ~~de~~ Po have been piling up for some reason that remains unclear.
- 2) CRS is sending an airlift of food to Santome toward the end of next week (around July 25-26). There is an urgent need to raise \$25,000 to cover the cost of chartering the plane.
- 3) Father Byrne reports that there continues to be an urgent need for food supplies saying that "one pound today is worth more than 100 pounds two weeks from now." There is urgent need for high protein foods, especially in weightless forms, such as, powdered eggs, fishmeal, baby foods and multi-vitamins. Large quantities of such supplies would be greatly welcomed.

It should be made clear that food is being distributed to victims of the Federal government side as well as to Biafrans, and in fact, a ship is leaving in two weeks for Calibar.

4) I also spoke with Dr. Van Hoogstraten of the Church World Service. (Our conversation was brief as he was about to leave his office. We plan to speak again tomorrow morning at greater length.) He expressed a great interest in a possible Jewish involvement and indicated that several Jewish persons had asked him if the Jewish community planned to do anything and he said that he was not aware of any Jewish concern until this telephone call. He indicated that the American Council of Voluntary Agencies is calling a meeting on July 30th to consider the broadening of the base for Biafran relief. He said in light of this call that he would see to it that AJC is invited.

Tomorrow morning we will speak at greater length and I will dictate a separate memo reporting on this conversation.

MIT:as

EC: S. Hirsh
M. Yarmon
G. Greun
S. Liskofsky
A. Kupperman
H. Rand
J. Bankl
J. Rudin