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## SUMMARY OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH EMERGENCY EFFORT FOR BIAFRAN RELIEF

July, 1968 -- July, 1969

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In late July of 1968 the American Jewish Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief was formed consisting of the following 21 national Jewish organizations:

American Jewish Committee  
 American Jewish Congress  
 American Joint Distribution Committee  
 American ORT Federation  
 B'nai B'rith  
 B'nai B'rith Women  
 Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
 Jewish Labor Committee  
 Jewish Theological Seminary of America  
 Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A.  
 National Community Relations Advisory Council  
 National Council of Jewish Women  
 National Council of Young Israel  
 Rabbinical Assembly  
 Rabbinical Council of America  
 Synagogue Council of America  
 Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
 Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America  
 United Synagogue of America  
 World Jewish Congress - American Section  
 World Jewish Congress - Governing Council

After several meetings, the Emergency Effort clarified its policy of (1) confining its activities to humanitarian relief efforts; (2) allocating whatever funds it raised to the existing private relief organizations rather than attempting to provide direct relief services itself, and; (3) sharing the costs of fund raising and administration amongst the constituent groups so that all of the monies raised would be made available for relief purposes.

Early in the fall, the Committee placed a full page ad in the New York Times announcing the formation of the Emergency Effort and appealing for funds to purchase food and medicine for the civilian population of Nigeria and Biafra. A similar ad appeared in other American cities including Chicago, Atlanta and Newark. The response was heartwarming, and almost \$50,000.00 was contributed in the first two weeks. As of June 30, 1969 a total of \$185,000. has been contributed.

The American Jewish Committee

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In addition to the funds received directly by the American Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief, many Jewish organizations throughout the country, stimulated by this activity, sponsored drives for Biafran relief in which contributions, both in food and cash, were secured. No exact figures are available as to the amounts raised by these sources and that were sent directly to Biafran relief agencies. A conservative estimate would place the value of this separate fund raising as at least equal to that raised directly through Jewish Emergency Effort.

With the receipt of its first funds the American Jewish Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief appointed a small Allocations Committee consisting of representatives from half-a-dozen of the constituent organizations. This Allocation Committee was given authority to distribute the funds as they were received and needed.

In September, 1968, the Emergency Effort made its first allocation of \$20,000.00 to the Catholic Relief Service and \$18,000.00 to the Church World Service. These sums purchased critically needed food and medicine in the fall of 1968, which were flown in from the Island of Sao Tome by a precarious airlift made up of Christian relief agency aircraft. This allocation made possible the shipment of 20 flights of food, amounting to 200 tons, and one flight of medical supplies that was flown from Portugal to Biafra. [Prior to September, 1968, \$19,000.00 was turned over to the Church World Service, the Catholic Relief Service, and UNICEF in checks made out directly to these organizations.]

On December 15, 1968, a joint Jewish-Catholic-Protestant direct chartered emergency airlift for Biafra left Kennedy International Airport carrying 40 tons of food and medicine, including 100,000 doses of urgently needed measles vaccine. The American Jewish Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief paid the entire cost of the chartered flight, nearly \$40,000.00 while Catholic Relief Services and Church World Service contributed the foods and medicines that were on board the plane. UNICEF donated the measles vaccine.

In June, 1969, the American Jewish Emergency Effort for Biafran Relief made its third allocation. This gift totaled \$50,000.00 and was sent to Joint Church Aid-US. The money was used to keep C 97-G cargo aircraft, flown by Joint Church Aid, operating into the Uli airstrip.

Joint Church Aid-US represents the combined efforts of the Catholic Relief Service and the Church World Service, with representation from the American Jewish Emergency Effort via the American Jewish Committee. Joint Church Aid-US was organized at the request of the American government so that it could be the recipient of four C 97-G aircraft which carry a much larger cargo than

the Constellations and DC-6s that were used earlier on the Sao Tome-Biafra airbridge.

At the present time the Biafra relief situation is most confused. The airlift is closely dependent upon the military and political situation which changes almost daily in that troubled part of West Africa. Whatever the outcome of the war, it is clear the continued humanitarian efforts will be needed for some time to come and that we will undoubtedly again be called upon to take further action. At the request of Joint Church Aid, the \$21,000.00 still in hand is being held until it is required by them for an unanticipated new relief need emergency.