

2,000,000 dead in Biafra

Burke Organizes "Interpax"

Almost two million people have already died in Biafra. Latest figures estimate that 2,000 more are dying every day. The annual "famine" season looms near, and the situation can only get worse, unless someone acts.

Despite harassment, Joint church Aid and Canairelief are still flying in 100 to 150 tons of food each night. Canadians crew these planes and money comes from individual donations and private organizations. Two weeks ago, one of the three Canairelief planes was shot down and relief has been cut from three meals a week per person to two.

Meanwhile Britain, France and the Soviet Union flow arms into Nigeria and the war continues.

Canada has not withheld aid. The government has contributed \$2.5 million

in food to the Red Cross, which has discontinued flights. This compares to the United States \$75 million, almost all of it channelled through the Joint church airlift, and Germany's \$22 million.

The Canadian public has been equally stingy. Through the churches and direct contributions, Canadians have given \$467,000 to Canairelief. The Danish public contributes \$150,000 a month to the Nordchurch airlift. If the Canadian public gave as much on a per capita basis as the Irish, they would have given \$40 million.

Stanley Burke, formerly of the CBC has resigned from his \$30,000 a year job as the voice of National News to devote his name and energies to the cause of Biafran relief. His efforts have had a dramatic effect on public

contributions to Canairelief. But apart from appealing for relief, Burke has launched a new citizens group called Interpax. Its purpose is to stop the flow of arms to Nigeria, a move which he believes will force both sides to negotiate a settlement.

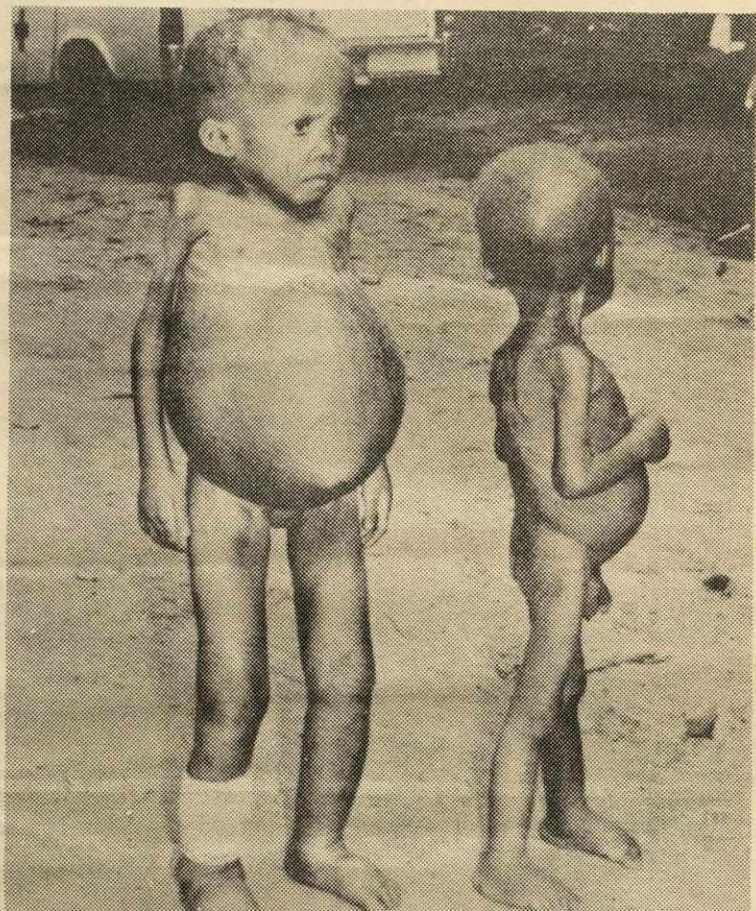
Student Councils in the Halifax area recently received letters from Stanley Burke and Interpax organization in Toronto. These letters said that November 27 had been decided upon for "Peace Biafra" in Canada, and appealed for support. "...those church leaders university students, and concerned citizens organizing this day hope to mobilize people in Canada to mourn the tragedy of the Nigeria-Biafra war through direct and positive action for peace.

Activity on November 27 will seek to impress upon our own government and those involved foreign governments, in particular Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union, that concerned people in Canada will not be silenced in their persistent cry for diplomatic initiatives toward a ceasefire, and an end to foreign finance and supply of arms shipments which have already cost two million lives". Dalhousie has been one of the Councils asked to help.

Several courses of action have been suggested. Speakers and films will be available to groups interested. Peaceful demonstrations, such as fasting with participants donating the cost of the meals they would be missing, are possibilities. Petitions will be sent to the British and Canadian governments, and fund-raising projects could be organized if people show sufficient interest.

"One reason for the continuation of this war," says Janet Hull, Dalhousie activity co-ordinator, "is that people around here remain indifferent to two million African deaths. By concentrating efforts at this time, we can impress upon our neighbors and our government that continued insensitivity and lack of diplomatic action are no longer tolerable. "The opportunity is here: high schools, churches and interested citizens in the Twin Cities have been contacted. If action is taken, the whole city will be working together, if only for one day. The success of this venture depends largely on us."

For further information, contact Janet Hull 455-8719, or leave a message at the Chaplain's office.



Sitting in the lounge at Alexandra Hall last week talking with a girl from my home town, trying to change the subject (she was depressed and I knew why) I asked how many lived at King's girls' residence.

"About a hundred. . .ninety-nine now. . .that's not very funny, is it? . . . it's so sad".

One of the girls on her floor had died the day before.

"It's all so. . .well, like her room, her posters are on the wall, her things are in their places. . .it's all so. . .yet so unfinished".

Our words wandered. We talked about how some things were a waste of time, and how people were afraid to admit that there were "good's and bad's". About real happiness. Real love. We really didn't talk about death at all. Just life.

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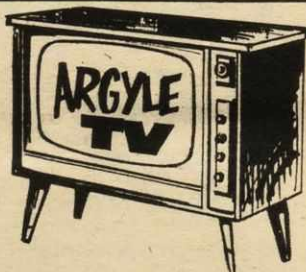
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