



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Biafra War collection**

ca. 1966-1970

Sc MG 788

## Summary

**Creator:** Cohen, Maxwell T., 1908-2000

**Title:** Biafra War collection

**Date:** ca. 1966-1970

**Size:** 1.04 linear feet (3 boxes)

**Source:** Gift of Barbara Cohen-Stratyner and Rachel Val Cohen, 2008.

**Revision History:** Finding aid updated by Lauren Stark.

**Abstract:** Between 1967 and 1970, the West African nation of Nigeria was embroiled in a deadly civil war six years after the nation gained independence from the United Kingdom. The Nigerian-Biafran War (also known as the Nigerian Civil War) was sparked by two coup d'états and several pogroms in 1966. The Biafra War collection, 1966-1970, primarily contains printed material - press releases, government propaganda, personal narratives, white papers, newspaper articles, etc. - produced by the various stakeholders involved in the Nigerian Civil War..

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Biafra War collection, Sc MG 788, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Accessioned by Artis Q. Wright, February 2009.

**Separated Materials:**

Transferred to the Photographs and Prints Division: photographs

## Creator History

Between 1967 and 1970, the West African nation of Nigeria was embroiled in a deadly civil war six years after the nation gained independence from the United Kingdom. The Nigerian-Biafran War (also known as the Nigerian Civil War) was sparked by two coup d'états and several pogroms in 1966. The

following year on May 30, 1967, Lt. Col. C. Odumegwu Ojuku and other military leaders from the Igbo dominated Eastern Region declared independence from the greater Nigerian Federation and proclaimed the birth of the Republic of Biafra.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Biafra War Collection, 1966-1970, primarily contains printed material--press releases, government propaganda, personal narratives, white papers, newspaper articles, etc.--produced by the various stakeholders involved in the Nigerian Civil War. The series Republic of Biafra propaganda includes pro-independence booklets and press releases printed by the Biafran Ministry of Information. The United Kingdom Parliament series contains official reports of parliamentary debates held in both houses of parliament concerning Biafra in 1968. The series Aid and food relief consists of several first person accounts written by international aid workers, doctors, clergymen, etc., during the conflict. One of the more intriguing first person accounts can be found in the unpublished memoirs of human rights attorney Maxwell T. Cohen (1908-2000) in the series of the same name. The collection concludes with the series First International Conference on Biafra and contains printed material given to participants at a Biafra conference held at Columbia University in New York City, December 1968.

**Arrangement:** Arranged into 5 series: I. Republic of Biafra propaganda; II. United Kingdom Parliament; III. Aid and food relief; IV. Maxwell T. Cohen; and V. First International Conference on Biafra.

## **Key Terms**

### **Geographic Names**

Africa, West -- History -- 1960-  
Africa, West -- Politics and government -- 1960-  
Nigeria -- Foreign relations -- Great Britain  
Nigeria -- Foreign relations -- United States  
Nigeria -- History -- Civil War, 1967-1970  
Nigeria -- History -- Civil War, 1967-1970 -- Personal narratives  
Nigeria -- History -- Coup d'état, 1966 (January 15)  
Nigeria -- History -- Coup d'état, 1966 (July 29)  
Nigeria, Eastern

### **Names**

Cohen, Maxwell T., 1908-2000  
American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive  
International Conference on Biafra

## Container List

### Republic of Biafra propaganda 1966-1971

#### Ministry of Information

##### Booklets 1967-1968

- b. 1 f. 1      **#-J**  
Includes *39 Accusations Against Nigeria*, n.d.; *Address by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe to Officers and Men of the 10th Battalion and School of Infantry, Biafra Army*, n.d.; *Address by His Excellency Lt. Colonel C. Odumegwu Ojukwu to a Joint Meeting of the Consultative Assembly and Council of Chiefs*, 1968; *Address by His Excellency Lt. Col. C. Odumegwu Ojukwu to an International Press Conference*, 1968; *Address by His Excellency Lt. Col. C. Odumegwu Ojukwu to the Organization of African Unity Consultative Committee Meeting at Addis Ababa*, 1968; *Biafra Deserves Open World Support*, n.d.; *The Case for Biafra: First Independence Anniversary Edition*, 1968; *The Concept of Territorial Integrity and the Right of Biafrans to Self Determination*, n.d.; *His Excellency's Address to a Joint Meeting of the Consultative Assembly and the Council of Chiefs and Elders*, 1968; *International Press Conference by His Excellency Lt. Col. C. Odumegwu Ojukwu*, 1968; *Introducing Biafra*, 1967; and *January 15 Before and After: 1966 Nigerian Crisis*, 1967.
- b. 1 f. 2      **M-W**  
Includes *The Meeting of the Nigerian Military Leaders Held at Aburi Accra Ghana, 4-5 January 1967*, 1967; *Memorandum on the Deliberate and Continuous Contraventions of the United Nations Charter Provisions on Human Rights by Nigeria and Her Practice of Genocide*, 1968; *Memorandum on Future Association between Biafra and the Rest of the Former Federation of Nigeria*, n.d.; *National Opinion Series No. 1: Nigeria Big-For-Nothing*, n.d.; *The Nigeria/Biafra Conflict: 4. British Involvement*, n.d.; *Nigeria: A Communist Beach-Head in Africa*, n.d.; *Nigerian Leadership: A Disgrace to Africa and the World*, n.d.; *Nigerian Program: The Organized Massacre of Eastern Nigerians*, 1966; *Ojukwu's Government Is the People's Government*, n.d.; *Present British Policy in Biafra: A Threat to British Investment Interests*, n.d.; *The Problem of Nigerian Unity: The Case of Eastern Nigeria*, n.d.; *State of the Nation: His Excellency's Address on the Occasion of the First Anniversary of Biafra's Independence*, 1968; and *We Are One in Biafra*, n.d.
- b. 1 f. 3      **Press releases 1968**  
Includes "March 31st: Statement by Commissioner for Information", March 28, 1968; "Statement to the Press at Port Harcourt May 8, 1968 by the Commissioner for Information", May 8, 1968; "Nigeria Air Raids on Biafra (August 1967 to 2nd May, 1968)", May 13, 1968; "Statement by the Commissioner for Information May 22nd, 1968", May 22, 1968; "Statement by the Ministry of Information", June 14, 1968; "Statement by the Commissioner for Information", June 19, 1968; "Ministry of Information Statement: The Real Test of Gowan's Guarantees", June 28, 1968; "Government Statement: British Government Relief Assistance", July 3, 1968; "Statement Issued Today by the Government of the Republic of Biafra", July 9, 1968; "Statement by Commissioner for Information", July 14, 1968; "The United Nations and the Nigeria/Biafra War", July 17, 1968; "Statement by Ministry of Information", July 26, 1968; "Biafra's Position on Relief Supplies", July 29, 1968; Untitled, July 31, 1968; "News Release", August 2, 1968; "Statement by the Commissioner for Information", September 12, 1968; "Address by His Excellency, Lt. Col. C. Odumegwu Ojukwu, Head of State and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces, Republic of Biafra to a Joint Meeting of the Consultative Assembly and the Council of Chiefs and Elders at Umuahia...", September 25, 1968; "Revolutions of the Joint Meeting of Chiefs and Elders Together with Members of the Consultative Assembly held at Umuahia...", September 25, 1968; "Nigeria Biafra Conflict – Nigeria's Weak Defense to the Charge of Genocide", October 25, 1968; "Enemy Atrocities in Kalabari", n.d.; "Following is the Text of Statement by China on the Chinese Attitude to the Nigerian Federal Government", n.d.; and "Membership of the Enlarged Consultative Assembly of Chiefs and Elders", n.d.
- b. 1 f. 4      **Biafran Overseas Press Division 1968**
- b. 1 f. 5      **Biafran Office of the Special Representative 1968**  
Includes "Extermination of a People", October 17, 1968; "Nigeria/Biafra Conflict No. 1: Who Are the Biafrans?", October 25, 1968; "Nigeria/Biafra Conflict No. 2: The Coup of 15th January 1966, and the Events that Followed It", October 25, 1968; "Nigeria/Biafra Conflict No. 5: The Ineffectiveness of Guarantees", n.d.; "Nigeria's 'International Observer Team' in the Nigeria/Biafra War", October 29, 1968; and "Protest Genocide", October 18, 1968.

Republic of Biafra propaganda (cont.)

b. 1 f. 6 **Biafran Directorate for Propaganda Library 1968**

Includes "Arms Sales", *The Guardian*, January 17, 1968; "Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches: Extract from the Minutes of the Discussion on the Nigerian Crisis", February 1968; "Full Text of Letter from Gowon to Mr. Wilson", June 1, 1968; "Nigerian Air Raids on the Civilian Population", n.d.; "Refugee Problem in Biafra", July 31, 1968; "Refugee Problem: Statistics", July 24, 1968; "Relief Supplies: Supply Route Politics", July 31, 1968; "Still Another Dutch Transport of Arms to Nigeria 'Batu' with Armoured Cars and Ammunition in Amsterdam", *De Telegraaf*, July 6, 1968; and "Wilson Assurance to Oxfam on Safety of Biafra Flights", *The London Times*, July 7, 1968.

**Printed matter**

**Articles and newsletters 1967-1970**

Includes "Biafra's Independence: The United Republic of Tanzania Presents the Pan-Africanist Viewpoint", 1968; "Biafra and the Liberation of Africa", Arthur Nwankwo, 1968; *Biafran Review*, "Principles of the Biafran Revolution as Enunciated by His Excellency, General C. Odumegwu Ojukwu Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Republic of Biafra", 1969, and "U.S. A.I.D. Fights Biafra", January 1970; *Biafran Sun*, October 2, 1968; *Biafra Time*, vol. 1, No. 3, May 1968; *Clearing House for Nigeria/Biafra Information* (Number 1, October 28, 1968; Number 3, December 15, 1968; Number 15, August 8, 1969; Number 18, August 29, 1969; Number 20, September 12, 1969; and Questionnaire #2, n.d.); and *The North and Constitutional Developments in Nigeria*, Evelyn Press Limited, 1967.

b. 1 f. 8-9 **News clippings 1966-1971**

b. 1 f. 10 **Miscellaneous undated**

b. 2 f. 1 **United Kingdom Parliament 1968**

Includes House of Commons official reports, January 19 and 30, 1968; House of Lords official report, February 13, 1968; and House of Commons Standing Committee on External Affairs National Defence, 1968.

**Aid and food relief**

b. 2 f. 2 **Articles and reports 1968-1969**

Includes "Medical Services in Biafra During the Nigeria/Biafra War" by Dr. A. Alozie, June 26, 1968; "Owerrinta" by Rev. O. Carton, August 30, 1968; "Biafra" by Onuora Louis Ekpechi, June 10, 1969; "Measles and Smallpox Immunization Campaign: An Urgent Appeal" by B. Gans, November 11, 1968; Statement by Rev. S. Horrigan, October 1968; "The Welfare Scheme for Biafran Children" by Dr. A. E. Ifekwunigwe, n.d.; "Journey to Biafra" by Stephen Lewis, October 1968; "Excerpts from Reports Received by Norchurchaid" by Mona Mollerup, n.d.; "Nigeria/Biafra Crisis Continues", UNICEF, n.d.; and "Food and Relief Situation in Nigeria/Biafra", October 28, November 14, and December 14, 1968.

**Aid groups**

b. 2 f. 3 **Aid to Biafran Children 1968-1969**

Includes Letter to Norman Cousins from G. A. Onyegbula, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, Republic of Biafra, November 2, 1968; "Note on the Norman Cousins AID to Biafran Children Project", December 12, 1968; Letter from E. Ritchie, medical superintendent from Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Biafra, December 13, 1968; "The Norman Cousins-Aid to Biafra Children Project (Submitted by Biafran Government at Umuahia Dec. 13, 1968)", n.d.; "Aid to Biafran Children", March 2, 1969; Letters from Dr. Frank Catchpool, August 17, August 31, and September 2, 1969; "Mobile Health Team", n.d.; "The Norman Cousins and to Biafran Children Project", n.d.; and "Report of Visit to Biafra by Drs. Fareed and Pope," n.d.

b. 2 f. 4 **Americans for Biafran Relief 1969-1970**

Includes "Connecticut State Welfare Department Annual Report on Charitable Organizations", June 30, 1969; "Financial Report on Food for Biafra, Inc. (AKA: Americans for Biafran Relief)", June 30, 1969; "Report on Conditions within Biafra", August 25, 1969; "Resolution", September 4, 1969; Letter to President Robin Jordan, Arthur Denues, October 2, 1969; Report on Biafran refugee camps in Ivory Coast, February 27, 1970; and "Prospectus: Americans for Biafran Relief", n.d.

b. 2 f. 5 **American Committee to Keep Biafra Alive 1968-1969**

Includes Statement by Chairman Paul Connett, November 14, 1968; "Current News from and about Biafra", May 30 and September 16, 1969; "Biafra Lifeline", n.d.; "Biafra: The Only Dialogue Is with Death", n.d.; and "The Magnitude of the Relief Problem", n.d.

Aid and food relief (cont.)

Aid groups (cont.)

- b. 2 f. 6      **Biafra Relief Services Foundation** undated  
Includes "Fact Sheet #5 on the Nigeria-Biafra Tragedy", n.d.; "How the Biafra Christmas Ship Came About", n.d.; "Mission of Hope", n.d.; and "Starving Children of Biafra War: Victims of British Oil Interest in Nigeria", n.d.
- b. 2 f. 7      **Catholic Relief Services** 1968  
Includes "Memorandum Submitted to the Holy Father on Behalf of the Archbishop and Hierarchy of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province...", January 1968; *Catholic Relief Services Quarterly Information Bulletin*, 1968 (Spring, Summer, and Autumn Editions); "A Memorandum on the Nigeria-Biafra Situation to His Eminence Cardinal Cushing", Fintan Kilbride, July 18, 1968; *Twin Circle: The National Catholic Press*, vol. 2, no. 38, September 22, 1968; and "Your Dollars at Work Saving Lives in Nigeria/Biafra through Catholic Relief Services", n.d.
- b. 2 f. 8      **Miscellaneous**  
Maxwell T. Cohen  
United Nations Genocide Convention
- b. 2 f. 9      **Letter to Secretary General U. Thant on behalf of Biafran Mission to the United Nations** 1968 November 11
- b. 2 f. 10     **Letter to United Nations General Assembly President Dr. Edvard Hambro on behalf of Southern Sudan Liberation Front** 1970 December 10
- b. 2 f. 11     **Miscellaneous**  
Memoir excerpts
- b. 2 f. 14     **Biafra**
- b. 2 f. 13     **Southern Sudan**  
Miscellaneous
- b. 2 f. 14     **Biafra**
- b. 2 f. 15     **Algeria**
- b. 3 f. 1      **Nigeria**
- b. 3 f. 2-3     **Southern Sudan**
- b. 3 f. 4      **Africa (general)**
- b. 3 f. 5      **Correspondence 1968-1969**  
Includes letters from Miriam Makeba (on behalf of her and Stokely Carmichael) and G. A. Nwanze, Secretary to the Head of State, Republic of Biafra.
- b. 3 f. 6      **First International Conference on Biafra** 1968 December 7-8  
  
Includes pamphlet; welcome letter from Executive Committee; workshop itinerary; proceedings catalogue; and letter from conference attendees to United Nations regarding genocide.