not on whether to be involved but upon what form our involvement will take. To the extent that this argument is valid, we are to some degree responsible as a nation for what is taking place in Nigeria.

Opposed to this general argument, however, is that which disclaims the power and the responsibility of the United States to police the world, which minimizes the ability of the United States to limit conflicts and extend benefits to various areas of the world. Those who make *this* general argument must also make a particular case for active U.S. intervention in the affairs of Nigeria if they wish to see a change in present policy. Nor will it suffice to urge simply humanitarian aid of food and supplies. The consequences of such aid being administered by the U.S. government would be vast, extending into our relationships with England, Russia, Egypt and other African countries.

What is at question, in brief, is the role of United States foreign policy. Although inconsistency is inevitable in the practice of foreign policy, it is not yet a virtue in theory. Those who urge upon our government a change in U.S. policy have themselves some obligation to attempt to foresee and extend support for the consequences of that change. The recognition of this responsibility is especially needed when criticism and suggestions are directed to a new administration, traditionally alleged to be, in its initial stages, more open and flexible than its predecessor. In the meantime the Biafrans need all the material the non-governmental organizations can airlift in. J.F.

CONSCIENCE & COMMUNITY

Deep-rooted conflicts are disrupting the most important institutions of our society. Political, religious and educational organizations are undergoing what are, despite particular differences, similar crises. The various struggles which tear at these organizations as they are presently structured stem from deep-rooted conflicts between the rights of the person and the communities to which he belongs, between the individual conscience and the laws and customs supported by the community. In attempting to resolve these problems, or even to think about them clearly, we need all the help we can get.

An announcement from the Friends Peace Committee offered some help recently. But if the source of such assistance was familiar, the kind of assistance, inadvertently offered to most of us, was not. Many who are neither Quakers nor pacifists have come to regard the Friends as strong proponents of the rights of the individual conscience even, and especially, when that conscience opposes itself to some of the strongest claims that a duly organized government can impose upon it. Even those who have felt that the Friends overweighted the rights of the individual when balanced against those of the community have acknowledged the values the Friends have striven to uphold.

It is in this context that the recent announcement of the Friends takes on particular meaning. In an open letter to the yearly Meeting of Friends, their Peace Committee asked, "What does the Society of Friends, as a corporate body, say to its members who join the armed forces?" The Committee initiated its own considered reply to this question by saying, "Generally we say nothing. When discussions occur, this question is likely to bring forth vigorous support for the rights of conscience, as if there were no grounds for evaluation of actions if they are sincerely motivated, and as if individual conscience were more valid than the corporate conscience of Friends."

The Peace Committee then asserted as part of their own beliefs, statements which include the following:

"The essence of what we must say is that we are disappointed and stand in loving disagreement with those who enter the armed forces.

"We believe that individual Friends should live by the corporate Quaker faith.

"We historically, and currently, renounce war, militarism, and conscription.

"We specifically advise young Friends not to participate in the armed forces.

"A decision by any individual to participate is in direct opposition to what Friends have corporately been led to believe is the Truth.

"We deeply regret each decision to enter the armed forces. Young Friends and their parents and their Meetings are entitled to know this before the decision is made."

If those of us who are not Quakers attempt to think with them sympathetically about this particular problem, we may come to—not a solution —a better understanding of our own problems, our rights and our obligations.