

*External Aid*

● (8:50 p.m.)

I have seen much of the death, turmoil, insecurity and fear that today possesses the people in this part of Africa. When I was in Biafra and after I came back here I asked myself several questions. I did so, for example, in the midst of about 4,000 little children under the age of 10 who, as my colleague said, were standing with their little soup bowls out, looking at us with their big brown eyes and asking us to help to end this war if we possibly could. I said to myself then that the world stands idly by doing virtually nothing. I also asked myself how civilized is mankind. Does mankind only have a thin ring of civilization that encircles it, and once removed it is basically selfish? I also asked myself how international mankind is. Do we have an international spirit and an international feeling?

I hope that I am speaking basically from an international perspective tonight. I hope that I realize inside of myself that all men are basically brothers regardless of their race, the colour of their skin, their origin or their religion. I seriously believe that this is not an isolated problem but one which should concern the whole world. For example, the symptoms of the Nigerian-Biafran disease do not only exist in Nigeria and Biafra but exist around the world. These are the symptoms of discrimination, the symptoms experienced by the powerless and underprivileged people. We see this in all corners of the world. These are the problems of hunger, of starvation, the massacres and mutilations, and the fears and insecurity. But perhaps more than anything else we see the problem of helplessness all around the world. It exists right here in the urban ghettos of Canada, on many of the Indian reserves and among the smaller farmers in western Canada as well as among the working people and the young people.

As I said, the situation in Nigeria and Biafra is an international problem. It is not, as some people like to think, an African or a purely Nigerian problem. It is a problem which concerns each and every one of us. I think it is time that we as human beings and as members of the international community started to talk in international terms. It is time we started thinking that we are brothers and that we are all members of the great human race. It is time we started thinking that African problems are as relevant to us here in Canada as Canadian problems are relevant in Asia or Africa. It reminds me of the saying which goes something like this:

[Mr. Nystrom.]

"Do not ask for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." This is our problem which we all have to share together, for every problem of humanity is a problem for you and me.

The Prime Minister is talking of the new politics. I think a very important part of the new politics is the human concern and the human understanding for all peoples, regardless of their background. It is a concern to eradicate war and to find peaceful solutions for the problems that plague mankind. It is the concern to eradicate mistrust, insecurity, ignorance, poverty and disease from the face of the earth.

A few years ago U Thant said that as long as two thirds of the world's population is either starving or living in a state of deprivation or hardship we cannot have peace. I agree with this, and I think we have to promote understanding, brotherhood and progress among mankind. People are starting to talk this way because in the society in which we are living there is a feeling of concern, which also exists among members of this house, to really do something to end the suffering in Nigeria and Biafra. I think the Secretary of State for External Affairs, especially at the outset of this conflict, showed some kind of humanitarian concern; but the Prime Minister put his foot down and stopped the minister from doing anything about it.

So basically, the responsibility is on the Prime Minister of this country. It is a terrible responsibility for he must do a number of things. He must be bold and he must try some new things instead of relying on the old wishy-washy type of philosophy, sitting back in the corner debating legal technicalities and interpretations of international law.

The Prime Minister must show us some of the new politics and a new determination. He must bring Canada into the forefront in this international conflict in the search for peace and understanding. If he does not do things like this, then a few months or a year or two from now he must not ask why we have alienation and frustration in our society. He must not ask why more and more people are losing faith in the democratic process as it exists in our contemporary society because people are fed up with not getting results from governments. This will be a crucial test for the Prime Minister, for the government and indeed for our political system.

Canada can take the lead in ending this war and it must take the initiative. I think this is the greatest of all humanitarian acts that Canada can perform at this time. The