

from him, would the Prime Minister arrange for the minister to be here some time today to give us a statement in some detail?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, the minister is not here because he is in his office working actively on this very question. I feel it is more useful for him to do that than to be here in the house to answer questions.

**Mr. Thomas M. Bell (Saint John-Lancaster):** Does the Prime Minister realize that a delay of three or four days in waiting for a statement from the minister on this matter may mean 20,000 Biafran lives?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

[Translation]

**Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to get some clarification from the right hon. Prime Minister.

In view of the answer he just gave the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise), are we to understand that he no longer believes in mediation between the two parties concerned?

[English]

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. In the confusion I think the Prime Minister was not able to answer the part of my question with regard to whether or not Lagos is in fact reneging on the agreement.

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, I would not make that accusation against the government of Lagos. Hon. members apparently have referred to a statement which was made to the United Nations by the minister of external affairs of Lagos. Apparently there is some problem in respect of knowing how this will be interpreted by the government of Lagos. Frankly, at this point I cannot speak for them. I repeat that we have been endeavouring without success to clear it up both at this end by talking to the commissioner, who is in hospital and at the other end by obtaining a confirmation. Here again, however, I must repeat that the negotiation is essentially a matter for the Red Cross and if the government in Lagos chooses to interpret the words spoken in New York in a different way than they are interpreted by hon. members, then of course there is nothing we can do about it. I am not saying that this is what is being done. I am saying that it is the policy of the government at Lagos which has to be translated into action

for it to be the way hon. members heard it in New York.

**Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka):** Could the Prime Minister explain about whom he is concerned in respect of his reference a few moments ago to the imperialistic press?

**Mr. Trudeau:** I was quoting the representative of the government of Mali at the United Nations. I was indicating to hon. members that our concern regarding the internal affairs of Nigeria, as defined by the Organization for African Unity, was well founded and that the case in that respect for internal affairs had been made by the government of Mali by saying that la presse impérialiste et les philanthropes opportunistes—I believe the phrase was—of our countries should not try to interfere in Nigeria. In other words, they are telling those who, under the guise of humanitarianism, are trying to tell Nigeria how it should settle its internal affairs; that they are acting in some direction of imperialism rather than in a sense of real concern.

**Mr. Aiken:** Is the Prime Minister in accord with the philosophies of the government of Mali?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I do not think we should enter into a philosophical debate at this point.

## AGRICULTURE

### REQUEST FOR ACCELERATED DEPRECIATION ON GRAIN DRYING EQUIPMENT

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Finance whether he has received representations from the minister of agriculture for the province of Saskatchewan and, if so, will he now accede to the request to allow farmers accelerated depreciation on grain dryers?

**Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I have not received that representation in this regard. However, I did receive a representation from the hon. member yesterday and I have received representations from several members on this side of the house. I am having the matter examined at the present time.