

Mr. Sharp: This has already been started. The words I used were: "We will work toward a better international legal framework within which humanitarian assistance can be provided to peoples affected by civil conflict." That is what we are doing in the United Nations today.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): In connection with the Minister's remarks about the observer team, I was wondering whether the suggestion had been explored that the team should be expanded, as Nigeria has requested, and that it should use its own vehicles, with the possibility of seeing all the areas presently involved in the conflict. The Minister did not say whether inquiries had been made in this direction.

Mr. Sharp: The Hon. Member may recall that when the team itself suggested that its operations should be expanded I supported that idea in a cable to the authorities in Lagos.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Would the Minister answer the other part of the question with regard to the vehicles and the expansion of the team?

Mr Sharp: We made it clear we would be prepared to help in that respect.

Mr. Brewin: Has the Minister made inquiries into the question of whether the airport at Calabar, in Eastern Nigeria, a region presently occupied by the federal forces, is not perfectly capable of accepting Hercules aircraft on frequent and repeated flights? It is one of the major international airports there.

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Before I came to the House today I asked the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Cadieux) if he would give me an account of the position there, and I shall read the relevant sentence:

"Beginning 17 October, the Canadian reconnaissance team was permitted a survey of Calabar and Enugu airfields in Nigeria. Calabar was found to be acceptable by the Canadian team for limited Hercules operations. However, sustained operations would have seriously damaged the runway, which was not acceptable to the FMG."

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