

accusing the Federal Nigerian Government of genocide, and I think that that Government acted wisely in inviting observers from a number of countries and organizations to assess the situation independently. The reports of the observer team have refuted these glib charges. For our part, we take this operation very seriously and expect our observers to move about freely, observe and report fully and frankly. They have done so. So has the United Nations observer.

May I pay a personal tribute to the Canadian officers involved, as well as to the officers and crews of the Canadian aircraft involved in our relief contribution, for the spirit and competence with which they have been performing duties which are somewhat out of their regular line. We are proud of them all.

With respect to our aircrew, Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in informing the House that the ICRC has communicated to the Canadian Red Cross its praise for the efficiency and conduct of the Canadian Hercules crew presently stationed in Fernando Po. The National Commissioner for the Canadian Red Cross states that this heartwarming message is of particular significance because no similar message had been received by the ICRC in Switzerland from its official in Africa with respect to any other aircrew.

There are many facets to the Nigerian problem. Much information has been brought out in the Standing Committee, and I believe the Canadian people are now better informed about its complexities and better able to understand the position of the Canadian Government. I should like to put that position briefly again in conclusion. The Government shares the deep concern of the people of this country with the suffering that is going on in Nigeria, and is anxious to help relieve it. It is doing so in a generous and responsible manner. We will continue to afford assistance and to increase it, if that is feasible, in order that human suffering can be alleviated. We will, moreover, continue to encourage in whatever way possible the peaceful settlement of the Nigerian dispute. We measure any suggested action against a single standard: Will it be effective?

Canada intends to remain friendly with all the peoples of Nigeria long after this dispute is settled, and to be in a position where we can play a useful role in assisting the African states to meet their problems. Our policies to this date have been designed to ensure that possibility. All information that reaches us from both parts of Nigeria indicates that we are successful to date.

The torment of the Nigerian peoples must be concluded as soon as possible. At the same time, the future welfare of the Nigerian peoples must be protected and assured. We must not permit our anxiety to achieve the first objective so to foul our reputation and hinder our effectiveness that we will not be given by the parties the opportunity to assist in the long-term recovery of Nigeria.