

dian Government to assist the Nigerian Government militarily, but it would be equally wrong for the Canadian Government to assist the rebel régime politically. Each is an act of intervention. Each would be a presumptuous step – an arrogant step, I would say – for a country so distant as Canada.

#### HOW CANADA CAN HELP

What Canada can do, and what it must do, however, is to attempt to feed the children who will starve to death without help. A starving child prompts an emotional response – and properly so. But that emotion must serve to assist the children, and not the reverse....The nature of man is so perverse that in the past few years there have taken place tragedies of indescribable proportions in several developing countries: the mass slaughters during the partition of India, the atrocities in Algeria, the massacres in Indonesia. Even while the Nigerian war continues, there have been bloody conflicts in the southern Sudan and in Chad. The Canadian Government did not intervene, and is not intervening in these sad situations. No Canadian Government did so, and no Canadian opposition party criticized those decisions, because of the inescapable limitations upon the effective actions which Canada can take.

The Nigerian tragedy does not become different from these others simply because some persons employ superlatives, or repeat accusations of genocide when these allegations have been proved demonstrably incorrect, or relate highly inflated death-rate figures. Nigeria is only different because we know more about it and because it is children who are the principal sufferers.

I suggest that there are several points on which there is no dispute among Honorable Members. We share a common revulsion to the suffering which has been brought about by this war. We share a common desire to aid the victims. We all recognize the fragile and inadequate nature of a night relief airlift which must share a single runway and surrounding air space with competitive arms flights.

#### DAYLIGHT FLIGHTS

Where we differ is in our judgment of the best means to increase the flow of relief. On the basis of careful evaluations of reports received from qualified observers from many sources, the Government has concluded that the only truly effective way of delivering adequate supplies of relief to Biafra is by way of daylight flights. Not only is a daylight airlift safer but, because of the different flying conditions, many more airplanes could be accommodated in any one day than in any one night. When one adds to these facts the additional fact that the airport would not be used for arms deliveries in the daytime, then the flow of relief would increase severalfold.

These facts, which are indisputable, prompted the Canadian Government to do whatever it could to persuade the parties to permit daylight relief flights

to occur. In making these efforts we attempted to understand and to meet the objections which were raised by one side or the other to the principle of daylight relief flights.

#### CANADIAN INITIATIVE

I related to this House on November 4, 1968, and again two days ago, the Canadian initiative which exacted from the Lagos authorities a guarantee of safety for daylight flights. I am able to reveal, as well, that it was as a result of the visit of my representative to Nigeria in June of this year that the two essential elements of any daylight arrangements were identified and agreed to. These are the identification of the aircraft involved, and the inspection of the cargo.

Canadian efforts since that time have been directed to a means of assisting in this identification and this inspection. We have taken the position that it is not for us to assess whether the military fears of one side or the other are reasonable or responsible. Rather we have sought to produce a formula that would meet those fears, a formula which would assure the Nigerians that relief aircraft were in fact relief aircraft, that relief cargos were in fact relief cargos – in short, a formula that would assure the Biafrans that the aircraft were not disguised bombers or troop-carriers, that food parcels were not tampered with, that daylight flights could not be used as a cover for a hostile military operation.

The negotiations conducted this summer by the International Committee of the Red Cross were based upon these principles.

That is why, I think it is slightly unfair to suggest...that the Red Cross has been bogged down and caught up with outmoded conceptions. This is not the aspect which has deterred the Red Cross from attempting to bring its mercy flights to the Biafrans. That operation stopped...after a Red Cross aircraft was shot down in the middle of the night.

Even though it may have been clearly marked, it was shot down in conditions of poor visibility – *entre chien et loup*. It was following that that the Red Cross stopped flying. It did so not because problems of sovereignty were raised but because it realized, as I think we realized prior to that, that it would be infinitely better to reach agreement to fly by day. The reasons that agreement has not been reached, as I shall show in a moment, are not because of outmoded conceptions of sovereignty but because both parties have been unable to come to an agreement as to the conditions under which the Red Cross could pursue its mercy flights during the daytime. Therefore, it is not a legal technicality. It is a question of whether the Red Cross is permitted to make its mercy flights during the daytime.

#### CONSULTATION WITH U.S.

When the Ojukwu régime balked at the implementation of the proposed agreement because of fear of military disadvantage, Canada was disappointed but it made