

*External Aid*

a strong mandate for action. On the one hand, the government with commendable zeal is trying to make participatory democracy work—although I have never understood why democracy needs that adjective. Regional desks are being set up. People are being turned on and tuned in. Citizens are to take part in the decision-making process. But as the engines of participation are heated up the government and the Prime Minister, on the other hand, have cruelly turned off the humane instincts of Canadians. Attempts have been made to equate the feeding of Biafran civilians to feeding the Nazi army at Stalingrad. Is this not a paradox? It is grotesque to pronounce about the just society and renounce those who have suggestions for feeding the hungry and ending the fighting. As James Eayrs wrote: "A just society cannot call it quits at the 12-mile limit." People of good will all over Canada, in fact, all over the world, ask the question: "why can't we help? We want to. We are ready. Why must we wait for politicians to argue, with starving people as the pawn?"

The Canadian government has failed to put any pressure on the British government to stop the supplying of arms and ammunition. I single out the British government but I could add to that the government of France because of our special relations with those countries, and I would also hope we would take an initiative with regards to the U.S.S.R.

We justify our neglect by trotting out excuses about non-intervention. What about non-intervention at Suez in 1956 when, in my opinion, Canada enhanced her reputation in the world and a future prime minister won a Nobel peace prize as a result of massive direct pressure on Britain and France and because of bold and imaginative initiatives at the United Nations? Oil and diplomacy, treasure and pride, have a great deal to do with the attitude of some of the major governments of the world to this tragedy.

Two weeks ago the Prime Minister of Great Britain in a speech at the Guildhall in London spoke of his:

—determination for human rights, a detestation of discrimination based on race or on colour... Above all, in Rhodesia... But human rights are at stake not only in Rhodesia. They are at stake in Gibraltar—and the issue is not one whit reduced by the fact that we are talking about 23,000 and not four million.

Commenting on Mr. Wilson's speech the *Spectator* of November 15 had this to say:

Evidently... it is reduced out of existence when we are talking of seven million. At least, if the [Mr. Fairweather.]

seven million are Ibos. For in its policy towards Nigeria the British government is engaged as principal accomplice in the biggest suppression of human rights—and of human life—in the non-Communist world today.

This is the *Spectator*—language that some people might find tough.

Yet human rights mean nothing, it seems, when it comes to Biafra. On the subject of Nigeria, Mr. Wilson in his Guildhall speech simply fell back on the old Commonwealth Office platitudes. "Fewer still are the countries in Africa who will not lay themselves open to division and balkanisation on tribal lines, if we, all of us, fail in securing a solution... based on the integrity of that country."

• (4:20 p.m.)

He speaks of "the integrity of that country". What kind of concept is this when people are dying? It is so old fashioned it makes men groan. The *Spectator* continues:

For 17 months now Biafra has been fighting desperately to secure its independence—after the so-called experts from the British High Commission in Lagos and the Commonwealth Office had assured the British government that all would be over in 17 days. Yet in spite of this the government apparently goes on believing the nonsense that continues to pour out from these same "experts".

Then the *Spectator* says:

What must be stopped, they argue, at whatever cost to human life, is "balkanisation".

What about Nigeria? As the *Spectator* says, it is:

—a country whose "integrity" did not exist until it was invented by Britain in 1914, and whose only unifying force for almost the whole of the subsequent period was British colonial rule. Long before Biafra, the Ibo-dominated eastern region, seceded after the 1966 pogroms in which tens of thousands of Ibos were murdered and many more maimed and mutilated, there had been threats of secession from the Yoruba-dominated west and the Hausa-dominated north. Whatever happens, the long-term prospects of Nigeria remaining one are negligible.

The *Spectator* article then goes on to talk about various federal states and collections of artificially collected countries such as the East African Federation, the commonwealth of the West Indies, Malaysia, and so on. They could not survive the artificiality of their concept.

Many of us have been excited by the concept of the global village. But if the concept is valid and not just a catch phrase, some of the elements of village life will have to become part of this larger prospect. In the villages I know the inhabitants give food to those who are hungry. My villagers succour the sick and comfort the dying. I am not