

*External Aid*

get flights into Biafra but rather one of hesitation and readiness to accept obstacles.

• (5:00 p.m.)

I was asked at a meeting the other day, when I discussed this matter, what was the basic difference in the proposals I was making about relief supplies and what the government was doing. I put the answer very bluntly. I said the difference would be the saving of literally hundreds of thousands of lives. When the hon. member for Egmont and I came back six weeks or more ago and spoke to the government, if the government had lent the four planes to the Red Cross as requested by Major General Wrinch, the Canadian commissioner for the International Red Cross, and if four more planes had been lent to the church operations and the operations had been continued, the result would have been on each day an additional delivery of 240 tons of food and medical supplies. Present deliveries are saving half a million lives. If the deliveries were doubled or trebled, twice as many lives or more would be saved.

I think it is only fair to say that the action of the government has been dictated by its view that the consent of the Nigerian authorities is necessary. This fundamental difference of opinion has resulted in the delays and inadequacies of the Canadian effort to help. It seems to me that the interests of humanity override other considerations and there are ways in which to get around obstacles. When the President of the United States was bound by a lot of neutrality laws in the last world war, he found means to overcome those difficulties by means of lend-lease and other devices. We are asking for an opportunity to feed starving people in the country of a government which claims to be the government of the area in question.

I started my speech by saying that I hoped to make a constructive and reasonable suggestion in respect of a conciliation team with Canada as a member and a distinguished constitutional lawyer as its representative. This could be done through the United Nations or, if that is not possible, outside the United Nations. I urge the government to keep an open mind on this whole matter and be prepared to review its policies in the light of facts as they are revealed. The government should in its inner conscience recognize its present policy as being based upon the British government's theory of the quick kill as the way to end the dispute, and on not encouraging this "rebel" régime. The Prime

Minister never speaks on this subject without underlining the word "rebel". It seems to me that after 18 months of fighting for self-determination one could find a different word than "rebel". In any event I urge the government to consider proposals for international action by a team of conciliators. If the United Nations will not take charge of the matter, the team of conciliators could be approved by both sides to the conflict.

Second, we urge the Canadian government to use all its powers of persuasion to get the British, U.S.S.R. and any other governments concerned to stop the export of arms. I suppose, in all fairness, this is a delicate matter. I do not know what the Canadian government has said to its British colleagues. When I made this suggestion one day the Prime Minister, flippantly I think, as is sometimes his wont, asked why we did not make the representations because we had some political sympathies with the party headed by the Prime Minister of Great Britain. I say it is a very different thing for an individual member of parliament to make representations than for a person who has the right to speak for Canada. I do not know what has been said to other governments in this respect. My view is that a solution of this problem will only come about when the British, Russians and others stop pouring arms into this territory.

I plead with the government to get nasty or tough, if necessary, about it. This is a tough proposition. If the government thinks what is being done is wrong, they should say something about it. I do not believe this is any time for quiet diplomacy if that quiet diplomacy does not work. I am in favour of trying quiet diplomacy but if it does not work something more is required.

Third, we urge the government to reopen with the Nigerian government the question of relief supplies being transported by Hercules aircraft into the area occupied by that government. It would be ridiculous, if it were not so tragic, to talk about Caribou aircraft taking the place of the Hercules. The Caribou carries two tons and the Hercules carries 20 tons. This is a palpably ridiculous excuse. Just what principle is involved as between Caribou and Hercules aircraft is difficult to understand. One is effective and the other is not. The Nigerian government will apparently accept one but not the other. I do not understand the principle involved in this question. The Canadian government should be firm with the Nigerian government on this point. It should point out that the validity of the