

*Alleged Failure to Aid Biafrans*

cannot simply be termed a technical reason or a matter of protocol. The fact that the Canadian government is bent on acknowledging the resolutions of the O.A.U. cannot be termed merely a scruple. The fact that we respect what we have helped to build—in this case, a friendly country, a member of the Commonwealth—cannot be termed stupid.

All these considerations are still significant if we want to play our part in the restoration work that will have to be undertaken as soon as the Nigerian conflict is over, if we want to retain the respect of the African continent as a whole, if we want to preserve abroad the image of Canada as a responsible country.

[English]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am sorry to interrupt the parliamentary secretary, but I must advise him that his time has expired unless there is a disposition to allow him to continue.

• (10:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I hope he will be allowed to continue so that he can answer the question that he said he would answer at the end of his remarks.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** With unanimous consent, the parliamentary secretary may continue.

**Mr. Goyer:** I thank hon. members. The Canadian government also believes that no one should send arms to the Nigerian war theatre. This is a firm statement which has been enunciated publicly many times. It has also been expressed to the leaders of other governments by both the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and the statement is well known to Britain, the Soviet Union and the other countries involved.

Recently Mr. Stewart, the British Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Gromyko, the Foreign Secretary of the Soviet Union, were in Ottawa, and when the Nigerian conflict was discussed during their talks here they were reminded of Canada's own policy of not supplying arms to this theatre, as well as our own view that none should be supplied. Those are facts; I suggest nobody can accuse the government of being passive.

Hon. members will agree that the cessation of arms shipments to the Nigerian side only

[Mr. Goyer.]

will not necessarily bring about an end to the war. Arms shipments to both sides must be stopped. But those countries who are reported to be supplying arms to the Biafran side deny such activity. As a result, it is extremely difficult to find a means of stopping all arms shipments. The government of Canada again calls upon all who are supplying arms to the two sides in this tragic conflict to look again at their policies. A complete cessation of arms shipments would undoubtedly help bring the end of this tragic war more closer and would save the lives of many. To conclude, I might recapitulate briefly the fundamental elements of the government's position. First, we are prepared to make further substantial contributions to relief needs in Nigeria, through whatever feasible and appropriate means may be open to the government.

Second, we, like many others, remain convinced that the urgent inauguration of daylight relief flights offers the most practicable and effective answer to immediate relief problems in the secessionist area.

Third, while keeping in close touch with the persistent efforts to bring about agreement on daylight flights, the government is also exploring possible alternative means of improving the relief delivery situation. Fourth, we stand ready to assist, in any way that both parties wish we might do so, in promoting a negotiated peace settlement. Fifth and finally, we look toward an effective role for Canada in the work of rehabilitation and reconstruction which must follow conclusion of this tragic conflict. I know the whole House, with all Canadians, shares the government's earnest hope that the day when this reconstruction process can begin will not be much longer deferred. Nigeria has always been an important area for Canadian economic aid, as shown by the nearly \$20 million that we have provided since independence, in addition to the \$3 million in relief. Peace will allow these important programs to go forward with new vigour.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether I might now put my question to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I followed his remarks with interest, and I noted the things he said we cannot do. Granted, there are some things that Canada cannot do in the present situation, and granted that some relief efforts, such as those of the Red Cross, have broken down, is it not possible for Canada to support at this time the one