

External Aid

"There are a number of reasons which compel us to take this point of view," Mr. Baetz said, "and transportation to Canada and the immigration regulations are the least important."

Moreover, Father Tessier in a recent statement, said this:

As human lives are at stake, our emotions could bring us to act immediately and assist those children, and many Canadians have offered to adopt them. This prompted the statements of the Prime Minister, Mr. Pierre-Elliott Trudeau, in the house on November 8. First, he mentioned that the initiatives for adoption in Canada of Biafran children must come from families, private institutions or provincial governments, as adoption comes under provincial jurisdiction.

As for the federal government, added Mr. Trudeau, it was ready to provide for the transportation to Canada of all the adopted children and, furthermore, to relax immigration regulations in the case of Biafran refugees... As for me, goes on Father Tessier, I can but agree with Mr. Roger Elophe, who is responsible, on the national level, for "*Urgences*", an emergency service operated by the *Secours catholique de France*, and who made some comments after returning from a journey that had brought him to the very doors of Biafra, in Cameroun and Gabon.

In answer to generous appeals, said Mr. Elophe a number of French families have volunteered to open their homes to Biafran children. It comes from a noble heart. But let us consider the hard facts: it does not appear to be either feasible or desirable. First of all, transportation is lacking and available means inadequate. Then, there are two possibilities to be considered:

"First, the children still have their family; is it a good thing to separate them from it? All the same, it would be unreasonable to do it without their parents' consent. Now, a simple question: will they give their consent?

"Second, the children who are sheltered are orphans or they have been deserted or lost; is it proper to move them away if not from their fellow-citizens at least from their natural environment?—

Most members of the committee did not want to be explicit and propose a cease-fire to allow intelligent negotiations. Who must take the initiative? Nobody wants to make the first move and during that time the war continues to decimate a population.

It would be necessary to conclude a cease-fire so to make General Gowon understand that to obtain the submission of the Ibos by force would never make good citizens of those people and would be useless to Nigeria. General Gowon should also be made to understand that there can be no unity in slavery or domination, between the dead and those who killed them. It is also important that both sides understand that time heals many things and that a cease-fire, without which negotiations are not possible, could solve many things.

[Mr. Laprise.]

And if it is not too late, that part of the African continent, and its inhabitants, could still progress and develop normally.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that all will be willing to help rebuild this country, and particularly heal the wounds left by the war. If the shooting and the bombing do not stop, it will really be a genocide to which we will have contributed by our lack of courage before certain powers more interested in saving their wealth and their pride than human lives that have no value for them.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the amendment proposed earlier by the spokesman for the Progressive Conservative party deserves all our attention and all our support. Consequently, these points should have been formally included in the report submitted to the house by the committee on external affairs and national defence.

● (5:40 p.m.)

As for me, I think that both points of the amendment tend to bring about a solution, although the mover did not want to be too categorical and he only made suggestions. I am sure that those who will study today's debates—I suppose that it will not only be members of the house and the Canadian press, but also all international agencies—will do it carefully. That is why, Mr. Speaker, I will support the amendment.

[English]

Mr. Pilon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I thought that before the beginning of this debate the house leaders had agreed upon a time limit of 20 minutes for speeches.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order. I was not aware of that arrangement when the hon. member for Provencher raised his point of order, but now I have the explanation from the hon. member for Chambly. Is this agreeable to the house?

Mr. Bell: Yes, Mr. Speaker, except in the case of those who have special privileges.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Except in special cases like the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister. Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Norman A. Cafik (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I am fully aware of the importance of this debate on the report of the standing committee on external affairs and national defence concerning the situation in Nigeria-Biafra. There is no doubt that all members of the