

Alleged Failure to Aid Biafrans

situation. Further on there is a provision which my colleague the hon. member for Greenwood read, that the personnel belonging to other voluntary agencies may be on the planes; but how are they to get on? The provision refers to personnel belonging to other voluntary agencies recognized by the federal military government, so if Canairelief or Joint Church Aid is not, as is the case now, recognized by the Nigerian government, they cannot have anything to do with these flights. There is a further provision about the way the planes are to be marked. How are they to be marked? The agreement states:

Routings to and from Uli, call signs, radio communication, emblems, types of aircraft and flight schedules shall be as agreed from time to time by the ICRC with the Nigerian Air Force and the Nigerian Army.

Then, this document states:

This agreement shall be without prejudice to military operations by the federal military government.

Who is making military demands, Mr. Speaker? Is it Colonel Ojukwu? If the Prime Minister has not seen the document to which I referred earlier, I am sure it is somewhere in the files of the East Block and he ought to be able to get a copy of it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I ask a question, Mr. Speaker? In case there is no assurance that the Prime Minister can get the information, would the hon. gentleman place those records on *Hansard*, because they would be very useful?

Mr. Lewis: I read some of them, and I do not believe that as an ordinary Member of Parliament I can table anything. But I shall make them available, if the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) do not have them. Between my colleague and myself, we will provide copies. I think what is more objectionable, if anything could be more objectionable than the sections I have read, is the last one:

This agreement shall be for a period of three weeks from a date to be agreed by the ICRC with the Nigerian Air Force and the Nigerian Army.

The date is to be agreed, not with the government authorities of Nigeria but with their military authorities. There is no time limit in the other document which Biafra approved. It is an agreement for daylight flights without time limit, which is the humanitarian approach. Who are the people genuinely trying to help the dying in Biafra?

[Mr. Lewis.]

Mr. Speaker, the reason, in part, that this debate arose and the reason why some of us cannot be cool about it is that time after time and day after day the Prime Minister rose in his place and either from a document or from his mind, laid all the blame on Colonel Ojukwu as the evil Satan in the situation.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lewis: That was partisan; it was narrow; it was uncalled for; it was unwarranted and untrue, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lewis: This is why some of us feel keenly about the matter. The Prime Minister says the actions of the government cannot be described as indifferent, as partisan, as obstinate. Maybe those adjectives are a little too mild, Mr. Speaker, to apply to what we have heard here today.

An hon. Member: Very mild.

Mr. Lewis: There is certainly indifference when for almost six months no aid has reached the people of Biafra except that from church organizations. And this government says, "Red Cross or starve".

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Lewis: That is not an exaggeration, Mr. Speaker—"Red Cross or starve". For six months no relief has been brought into Biafra except through night flights, and the government of Canada says, "Day flights or starve".

An hon. Member: And the Biafrans say "Ammunition or we will starve".

Mr. Lewis: I do not know whether any guns got through, but I should like to remind the hon. and vociferous member for Burnaby-Seymour (Mr. Perrault) that there is a war in Biafra and I have no doubt that arms are reaching Biafra. I do not blame the military leaders of Biafra for seeking arms to fight a war which they believe is right. I am not passing judgment on that point, I am not asking the government of Canada to pass judgment and I am certainly not asking the hon. member to pass judgment. I am not passing judgment; I am not asking the government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I wonder whether this is a good time to ask hon. members whether the hon. member has unanimous consent to continue.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.