

*External Aid*

I mentioned to the officials in London when I called there on the way back.

The Bishop of Calabar drew attention to something else. He went to his desk and took out a large picture of a starving child, one which had been published all over the world—we saw it here. He told us: This is what Biafra has sent around the world as a picture of a starving Biafran child. But all of us here know that this is an Epic child. People who live outside Africa would not know the difference, but this is the kind of thing which has been going on. No one is guiltless.

This business of propaganda has been the fault, to some extent, of our own Canadian media. I will give an example. We made that trip in the company of a reporter from the Toronto *Telegram* who had obviously made up his mind before he ever went to Biafra. He was obviously, biased in favour of the Biafrans, so much so that he wrote his story with the by-line "Biafra" even before he got there. He wrote it in Sao Tomé and as soon as he arrived in Biafra he sent it out on the wire. This is what I call irresponsible reporting, and it is the kind of thing which has been going on in this war. We have seen all kinds of biased reporting and propaganda going out from both sides. I think it is to be deplored, particularly, that a Canadian journalist would be part and parcel of that kind of bias. It is really a sad situation.

I plead with members of the house to abstain from making this sad situation into a political football. We all have our own ideas. If we want to embarrass the government let us choose some other subject—let us not choose the starving of people in Biafra and Nigeria as something out of which to make a political issue. The external affairs committee made a report. We did not all agree with everything in that report. I certainly did not agree with everything in it. In fact, I tried to put forward a couple of amendments, but my proposals were turned down. But when one is a member of a committee he tries to reach some kind of consensus. For example the fourth recommendation has to do with the building and rebuilding of airports. I felt this was going a little too far toward involvement in the war and I did not think this recommendation should be made. However, as I say, members of a committee try to reach general agreement.

I realize that the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) was not in agreement with most of the report. That is his privilege. But I certainly do not think we should wash

our linen outside the country; I think we should discuss our differences in the house and in the committee, and not take them abroad.

The day we left was the day on which the report was presented to the House of Commons, and for that reason we did not have a copy with us. But the hon. member for Greenwood chose to send a copy of his minority report along, so that Colonel Ojukwu had this report in his hands though he never did receive the other one. I do not think this is the kind of thing we should be trying to do, because it prejudices all our efforts. I would ask members of all parties to forget about their political differences in this instance. Let us try to work toward the best means Canada can find of helping the suffering people instead of trying to involve politics.

I should like to mention one small thing in connection with the Red Cross. It has worked very hard, and tried very hard, but I do not feel it has done a particularly good job in Nigeria. I think it ought to be mentioned for example, that the number of flights undertaken by the Red Cross has been far inferior in number than those carried out by the churches—about one half. I realize that the Red Cross may not pay its pilots the same rates, that it may have encountered difficulties with crews, and so on. But I think that if the organization placed a little more stress on its operations instead of on its administration there would be a great improvement. As an example, on Fernando Poo there are 56 people involved in administration, besides the crews of the aircraft. All those people are certainly not needed to handle the operations on Fernando Poo. This seems to be a common complaint in the area. Our Canadian servicemen were of the same opinion: There is too much concern about administration and not enough about the actual relief operation on the part of the Red Cross.

I believe it is Canada's best course to mind its own business, apart from trying to help meet the needs of Nigeria and Biafra in a humanitarian way. I hope all countries will adopt this point of view. With this in mind I would recommend two courses to the government. The first is as far as possible to increase aid to both sides—aid by means of daytime flights. I asked Colonel Ojukwu about day flights. He said he was in favour in principle but he could not agree to the Red Cross dictating the wheres and whys and wherefores. He may have a point. However, when there are thousands starving every day,