

*External Aid*

for the Canadian Red Cross states that this heartwarming message is of particular significance because no similar message had been received by the I.C.R.C. in Switzerland from its officials in Africa with respect to any other aircrew.

There are many facets to the Nigerian problem. Much information has been brought out in the standing committee, and I believe the Canadian people are now better informed about its complexities and better able to understand the position of the Canadian government. I should like to put that position briefly again in conclusion. The government shares the deep concern of the people of this country with the suffering that is going on in Nigeria, and is anxious to help relieve it. It is doing so in a generous and responsible manner. We will continue to afford assistance and to increase it, if that is feasible, in order that human suffering can be alleviated. We will, moreover, continue to encourage in whatever way possible the peaceful settlement of the Nigerian dispute. We measure any suggested action against a single standard: Will it be effective?

Canada intends to remain friendly with all the peoples of Nigeria long after this dispute is settled, and to be in a position where we can play a useful role in assisting the African states to meet their problems. Our policies to this date have been designed to ensure that possibility. All information that reaches us from both parts of Nigeria indicates that we are successful to date.

The torment of the Nigerian peoples must be concluded as soon as possible. At the same time, the future welfare of the Nigerian peoples must be protected and assured. We must not permit our anxiety to achieve the first objective so to foul our reputation and hinder our effectiveness that we will not be given by the parties the opportunity to assist in the long term recovery of Nigeria.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal):** Where is Biafra? A few of the world's people knew the answer to this question a year ago, and many more do today. Many Canadians know that Biafra is the eastern part of Nigeria in west Africa. We know too that people are frightened in that country. We know that people are hungry there; we know that people are dying there. We have seen the distended bellies of the children and we have seen their eyes. We are told that sovereignty prevents our responding—sovereignty, that

[Mr. Trudeau.]

hoary, outmoded nineteenth century concept. How much death and agony has been endured in its name?

Men say we must not feed the hungry unless the giving of the loaves and fishes is cleared with the appropriate government authorities. After all, protocol comes before protein and diplomacy outranks digestion. Are men becoming the captives of concepts? Are humane instincts being thwarted by ancient adages about sovereignty and interference in domestic affairs?

Cox in his book, "The Secular City", writes that there are no mysteries in the world any more. Man knows how to run it, man has the capacity to do the job, and man can control events. I submit that the great tragedy of the Nigerian civil war is that the international community has opted out.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Fairweather:** Its representatives mouth platitudes as alternatives to action. Is this really to be man's total mission here on earth? Do we continue our catalogue of inaction in so very many areas of the world?

I suppose there was a time in man's long struggle to civilize himself when he did not know how to respond to hunger, to war, to death and the many other forces which beset him. But man does know now. Man's barns are bursting with food, his storehouses are full of medical supplies, his hangars contain many aircraft. Man knows that war is not an acceptable method of solving political problems. Yet he talks, he excuses, he fails to act.

Is it any wonder that many thoughtful people have doubts about the utility of the United Nations in its present structure? Can a world body of 126 countries founded on principles of peace and human dignity expect less than despair when no way can be found to respond to a massive suppression of human rights and human life? I say, shame for the United Nations which operates under a charter that authorizes it to maintain peace but not to intervene in a man-made disaster claiming the lives of thousands of people each week.

In an editorial in the August 24 issue of *Saturday Review* Norman Cousins, that eloquent spokesman for a new and better world, wrote:

Biafra is a six-letter word spelling world shame. Shame first for the Nigerian government which is trying to starve the Biafrans into submission. Shame for the Biafrans who have been unable to come to agreement with Nigerian officials on the terms for allowing emergency food supplies to get through the blockade—