

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

he made an off-hand remark with regard to the constituency of Crowfoot.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Horner:** He can make any remarks he likes with regard to the representative of the constituency of Crowfoot but he, and I believe this house, should hold the constituency of Crowfoot in as good esteem as any other constituency represented in this house.

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

**Mr. Horner:** I would ask the Prime Minister to withdraw the remark he made about that very important constituency in this country of ours.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The question of privilege has been noted.

**EXTERNAL AID****NIGERIA—DELAY IN USE OF HERCULES AIRCRAFT**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Can he inform the house what is happening today with the Hercules aircraft intended to assist with relief in the Nigeria-Biafra tragedy?

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, just before I entered the house I inquired whether there were any developments subsequent to those reported to the house yesterday by the Prime Minister, and I was informed that there have been no further developments. The International Red Cross has not yet been able to secure the necessary approval of the new independent state of Equatorial Guinea or of the Biafran authorities for the use of our aircraft into Biafran-held territory. We hope this will be forthcoming shortly. As to the possible Canadian airlift in Nigerian-held territory, there continues to be difficulty with regard to the federally held forward air fields.

**Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont):** Mr. Speaker, quite likely the Secretary of State for External Affairs knows this, but yesterday a question was raised by the hon. member for York South concerning the possibility of making the planes available to some of the other relief agencies such as the churches and so on which are operating at Sao Tome. The Prime

[Mr. Horner.]

Minister indicated that this might not be a wise move at this point, but I wonder whether the government is giving consideration to making additional aircraft available for these agencies so that relief materials can get in from Sao Tome to Biafra.

**Mr. Sharp:** I think it is premature as yet. It is our hope still that the International Red Cross will be able to make the arrangements. It is better, I believe, for all concerned to work with the agency that has been approved by everyone.

**Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, this supplementary question is also for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the difficulty in obtaining permission in respect of the airlift from Fernando Po, has the minister consulted with the Red Cross concerning the statement made by the foreign minister of Nigeria that there would be no opposition to flights in from Sao Tome by the churches using Canadian planes if the Red Cross would supervise or at least look into the operation.

**Mr. Sharp:** Yes, Mr. Speaker; I made some inquiries about that statement. So far I have not been able to confirm that such statement is true, but I am still making inquiries.

**Mr. Brewin:** Would the minister speak to his own parliamentary secretary, who was present when that statement was made to several members of this house.

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** Perhaps the minister did not clearly hear my question. It was not a matter of dispensing with the services of the Red Cross at this point, but rather whether our government is taking some initiative with regard to making these planes available on the basis outlined by the hon. member for Greenwood to these relief agencies which are carrying on relief efforts nightly into Biafra from Sao Tome.

**Mr. Sharp:** I still believe it would be desirable to continue with the arrangements we have approved before we take any other action. I am not ruling out the other possibility, but in the meantime I believe we should work with the International Red Cross so long as they have arrangements which are satisfactory to the federal military government.

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, will the minister kindly advise