

who should convey formally these offers, travelled to Africa. As set forth in the Washington statement, dated November 12, 1969, the Biafran authorities, on October 24, formally rejected the offers which were designed to protect Biafra from military disadvantage, which is exactly what they had asked for.

(15) Canadian officials in Geneva have been informed by Biafran representatives that Biafra demands more than military assurances; that, in addition, guarantees of a political nature are required in order to break the impasse. The Canadian Government is not willing to give the political guarantees demanded, as these would be tantamount to recognition of an independent state of Biafra, and an overt interference by Canada in the political affairs of another country, contrary to the resolutions of the Organization of African Unity.

(16) During the past several weeks, the Secretary of State for External Affairs has continued his discussions about Nigeria with some 25 other foreign ministers, many of them from African nations, at the United Nations. I talked to Secretary-General U Thant about the problem in New York on November 11, as I had a year earlier. Canadian leaders have pursued the Nigerian issue with the leaders of two African countries who have visited Ottawa this fall. They were President Hamani Diori of Niger and President Nyerere of Tanzania. I can say that the unanimous view of these African leaders is that the Organization of African Unity resolutions must be respected.

(17) The Government is now considering, as stated a few days ago, alternative means of delivering relief to Biafra in daylight. It does so while agreeing entirely with the recent statement of United States Secretary of State Rogers:

Daylight flights under agreed procedures... remain the only practicable scheme for an immediate and substantial expansion of relief operations.

(18) The Government's concern remains, Mr. Speaker, as it has throughout, and as does that of Honorable Members opposite and indeed all Canadians, with the innocent civilian victims of this tragic war. Delivering adequate food and relief supplies to these people must be our resolve, notwithstanding the disinclination of the Ojukwu regime to accept it except in return for political advantage.