

Mr. TUNNEY. The same thing could be said for Vietnam. When you get into that kind of an argument, there is a time framework.

Mr. PALMER. I did not raise the argument.

Mr. TUNNEY. Vietnam was one country for 2,000 years; and, in 1954, it was made two different countries or two political subdivisions. So I suppose since 1954 we could say there have been two independent nations in Vietnam, which really never existed before. In Nigeria, when did Nigeria become independent?

Mr. PALMER. 1960.

Mr. TUNNEY. So there has been one nation in Nigeria since 1960. However, it is my understanding that there has been tribal rivalry in Nigeria going back into prehistory, probably for centuries.

Mr. PALMER. There have been tribal difficulties in a great many countries of the world, including a great many in Western Europe.

Mr. TUNNEY. Don't you think that the Biafrans feel that they have as much right to be independent as perhaps the other tribes in Nigeria feel they have a right to keep them a part of the federal structure?

Mr. PALMER. I think obviously they do have ambitions of this kind. As I say, you have to ask yourself where it is all going to end if anybody who wants to break away can do so on the basis of a perfectly free choice.

Mr. TUNNEY. But you will agree that the situation in Nigeria is quite different than it is in other countries in Africa.

Mr. PALMER. I would not say it is essentially different from what it is in the Sudan. I would not want to go into it in open hearing; but I would be prepared in executive session to say that I think there are other countries where there are very severe tribal strains.

Mr. TUNNEY. Do you feel that the Federal Government has done everything that it can to facilitate the transportation of food into Biafra?

Mr. PALMER. You cannot say that it has done everything it can because you have not been able to test it yet. You won't be able to test it until you get the agreement on principles that you need from the other side in order to test the whole range of arrangements. But I would say that I do accept at face value the expressed willingness of the Federal Government to open up land corridors going in there for the movement of food. It is my understanding that the Red Cross and other agencies also accept this at face value. The problem is that there has not as yet been a response to this on the other side that has permitted the trucks to roll.

Mr. TUNNEY. What about by sea?

Mr. PALMER. Biafra no longer has any seacoast. There is no longer any question of a naval blockade. I have a map here if you would like to see it, Mr. Congressman. As you see the Federal forces now have the country completely encircled. So there is no sea access to Biafra at the present time. The only two means of getting it in there are by plane and by land.

Mr. TUNNEY. What about by plane?

Mr. PALMER. There are very real limitations on this. There are political problems in connection with it. There are also logistic problems. At the present time the estimate is that you need 200 tons of food. The only possible airfields there are sections of road that have been converted into temporary landing strips. It would require a really