

CONSTITUTION, OR STATUTES, OF THE AGENCY

14. In his first telegram of January 8, M. Claude Morin, Deputy Minister of the Quebec Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, suggested (page 4) among other things that Canada propose an amendment to the draft statutes of the Agency which had been prepared by the provisional secretariat. The purpose of the amendment would have been to open up membership, not only to every francophone country or sovereign state, but to "all governments that participated in the first conference of French-speaking countries held at Niamey in February 1969". Such an amendment was, according to M. Morin, aimed at greater simplicity and flexibility in the functioning of the Agency. In fact, however, if it had been adopted, it would have permitted the Province of Quebec (as well as Ontario and New Brunswick, which were also represented on the Canadian delegation to the first Niamey conference) to join the Agency as full members and on the same basis as any sovereign state. ✓

15. This proposal was obviously unacceptable to the Government of Canada, which took no account of it in the various counter-proposals which it forwarded to the Quebec government, Quebec, for its part, repeated this idea, in one way or another, in each message it sent to Ottawa.

16. On February 27, the Prime Minister of Quebec specifically asked the Prime Minister of Canada for his views on the proposed amendment. M. Trudeau gave his reaction in his telegram of March 6. M. Bertrand returned briefly to this question in his telegram of March 10 before finally dropping the matter and concentrating on the four "principles".

17. France, during the Niamey conference, proposed amendments designed to allow adherence to the Agency by non-sovereign entities and even of international associations, making the same claim that this would render the Agency structure more flexible.

18. Separate participation by a Canadian province would be contrary not only to well-established rules of international law and to the Canadian constitution, but also to the principle of cooperation by the countries. This principle had been adopted at the first Niamey conference and then expanded upon afterwards by the President of Niger, His Excellency Diouri Hamani, and the provisional Executive Secretary of the Agency, M. Jean-Marc Léger.

19. On the other hand, the federal government made constructive proposals to Quebec--which Quebec in the end accepted--so as to enable the province to assume an important role within