

Inquiries of the Ministry

and the government the laughingstock of the country?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will appreciate that the question is not acceptable in its present terms. The hon. member for Greenwood.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**RHODESIA—CANADIAN POSITION RESPECTING ECONOMIC SANCTIONS**

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In light of Rhodesia declaring itself a republic, is the minister going to take the opportunity to make a statement on whether Canada will be relaxing, maintaining or increasing the economic sanctions against Rhodesia?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I may have occasion to make a more complete statement later, but I can say that we have no intention of relaxing any of the sanctions that have been applied against this country or any intentions of recognizing it.

[Translation]

NIAMEY—COMPOSITION OF CANADIAN DELEGATION TO EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Secretary of State.

As the Niamey conference will take place soon, is the minister in a position to tell if there has been any agreement with the Quebec government so that the latter may be represented there?

[English]

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we are having discussions with the Quebec government now which have not been quite completed. We are quite anxious, of course, that all provinces having a significant French-speaking group should be present at the Niamey conference. There is no disagreement amongst any of us on that point. We are insisting, however, that at the conference, which is an international conference between sovereign countries, Canada should be the delegate with the support of the other provincial delegations who have an interest in the subject matter.

[Translation]

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

Due to the importance of this conference for Quebec, which is the homeland of French Canadians, can the minister tell us if the federal government has offered to Quebec the co-chairmanship of that delegation?

[English]

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, we are offering to recognize the very special place that Quebec has as the principal French-speaking province.

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker I would like to ask a supplementary question.

Is the minister in a position to tell us whether the Canadian delegation to this Conference of French-speaking countries will be headed by a French-speaking federal member of Parliament and not by someone from some provincial organization?

[English]

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, there is some confusion here and perhaps I can dispel a little of it. So far as what might be termed the constitutional conference is concerned, the representative of Canada when the constitution of the new agency is being formed will, of course, be a Canadian minister. I expect he will be one of our more distinguished French speaking ministers.

Mr. Stanfield: That could include the minister.

An hon. Member: Where do you draw the line?

Mr. Sharp: For any subsequent conferences held under the aegis of this new constitution there could be, of course, differing arrangements. Indeed, as we have indicated in white papers which have been tabled in this House, the Canadian government would be very happy if a Quebec minister were the leader of a Canadian delegation.

[Later:]

[Translation]

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a supplementary question.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs said that discussions were going on with Quebec. As the conference will be held around the middle of the month, when will the minister be able to tell the House whether