

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

following up his questions, so I will answer his question first.

The hon. member for Egmont asked me whether I would investigate a recent report. I quote the hon. member's words:

All male Biafran refugees in Port Harcourt are in danger of being executed?

The report originated in a Radio Biafra broadcast of February 17 which alleged that all able bodied men in a certain refugee camp had been transferred to Port Harcourt for execution and that 120 men were executed during the week beginning February 10 at Port Harcourt.

First I would note that the Lagos government denied these reports on February 18. Second, General Hamilton, the Canadian representative on the Observer Team which visited Port Harcourt February 18 to 20 inclusive has informed me that the team visited the federal prison in Port Harcourt, and two refugee centres, the latter housing 3,000 and 4,000 refugees respectively. There was no evidence to support an allegation that all male Biafran refugees in Port Harcourt are in danger of being executed. Refugee camps appear to be well administered and are receiving medical aid and food from the Nigerian Red Cross and the International Red Cross. Many male refugees were seen and ample opportunity was afforded to them to voice their complaints or fears. None was offered. The team spoke to many civilians, including the head of the I.C.R.C. there. If 120 male refugees had been slain rumours would certainly have reached them.

**Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, relating to the ministers' reply to the Leader of the Opposition with respect to the conditions being attached by both sides in order to effect some kind of cease fire. In view of the statements made last Friday by foreign affairs commissioner Arikpo referring to new proposals for a cease fire allowing for more latitude than previously mentioned by the Nigerian military government, has our government or its representatives taken any steps, particularly at this time when there is a two day truce, towards initial discussions for a cease fire?

**Mr. Sharp:** Nothing would please me more than to see an agreement between the two sides upon which the initiatives could proceed.

[Mr. Sharp.]

Now may I answer the question of the hon. member for Greenwood—

**Mr. MacDonald (Egmont):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister's concurrence with my view but I wonder whether he would answer my question concerning whether we are making use of the opportunity to further such discussions.

**Mr. Speaker:** I remind the hon. member and the minister that we are running out of time and I notice there are a number of other members who seem to be anxious to rise to ask questions.

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I might now reply to the question of the hon. member for Greenwood of February 4. We have been actively engaged in consultations with representatives of certain other countries, both at the United Nations and elsewhere concerning the co-ordination of relief to civilians who may be suffering as a result of armed conflict. We have also been in touch with the International Committee for the Red Cross. Consultations are continuing and I hope arrangements will be worked out soon for some solution of this problem in an appropriate United Nations body. The Economic and Social Council is to meet shortly. Canada is not presently a member, but some of the other countries which are represented on ECOSOC are taking the initiative for us.

#### CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

##### INQUIRY AS TO STATUS OF DISPUTE WITH ARTEC

**Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Labour if he can advise the house whether or not he has received a report of the conciliation board in respect of the dispute between the C.B.C. and ARTEC? If he has not received this report can he tell us when he expects to receive it, and can he report to the house on the state of the situation at the moment.

**Hon. Bryce S. Mackasey (Minister of Labour):** I have not yet received the report of the conciliation board headed by Professor Arthur. When I will receive this of course is entirely within the competence of the chairman of the board of conciliation to decide but indications are that it will be very soon.