

Inquiries of the Ministry

which I presented on July 16. The reason I ask is that this is an important document which I think would be of interest to all hon. members who are concerned about the situation in Nigeria and Biafra at this time. When may we expect the production of these papers?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I will have to make inquiries, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I ask either the President of the Privy Council or the President of the Treasury Board whether something might be done to expedite the handling of my notice of motion for production of papers No. 189, having to do with a study of the pensions of retired public servants?

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I would be glad to have a presidential conference about this. If I might, I should like to point out to the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville that his motion was called last week and transferred for debate.

An hon. Member: He was absent.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Harding: Mr. Speaker, earlier today I was notified by the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Fisheries that notices of motions numbered 197 and 200 would be called. I wonder when they intend to bring these forward.

Mr. Whelan: Next sitting of the house, Mr. Speaker.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**EXTERNAL AID****BIAFRA—REPLY TO CANADIAN OFFER TO PROVIDE NEUTRAL RELIEF FLIGHT OBSERVERS**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Has he as yet received any word from the government of Nigeria with regard to the proposal made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs on behalf of the government of Canada?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have had no

[Mr. Nystrom,]

direct response from the Nigerian government but our proposal, among others, is being considered by the various bodies which are supplying relief and is being discussed. It seems to be a useful contribution to the discussions going on, but unfortunately this has not resulted in the kind of action we want.

Mr. Stanfield: Does the Secretary of State for External Affairs have in mind any further initiative on the part of Canada to bring matters to a successful conclusion in view of the reported imminence of the continuation of mass starvation? I asked the Secretary of State for External Affairs the other day whether he had any further measures in mind and his short answer was yes. Would he elaborate on what measures he proposes to take?

Mr. Sharp: We are engaged in discussion with all bodies concerned such as the United States government, the British government, the Nigerian government, the Red Cross and the other various agencies in a search for some means to break the deadlock.

Mr. Stanfield: Has the Secretary of State for External Affairs considered asking the government of Great Britain directly whether it would consider imposing an arms embargo unless some satisfactory solution is worked out promptly to bring relief in both Nigeria and Biafra?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman would agree that the cessation of arms shipments by all sides is what is most desirable.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether any further consideration has been given to the suggestion that Canada use its good offices and initiative in getting the parties together, along with the representatives of the International Red Cross and the church organizations, in order to discuss this matter in view of the tremendous emergency?

Mr. Sharp: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Very careful and continuous discussion is going on in respect of this matter but as yet we have not been able to get agreement among the parties most concerned as to the most useful way to pursue this initiative.