

*Inquiries of the Ministry***ORAL QUESTION PERIOD****EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****NIGERIA—DISCUSSIONS LEADING TO
CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES**

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs whether he can now say briefly what message he has sent to the government of Nigeria through our High Commissioner in Lagos.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, our High Commissioner has not yet been able to make arrangements to see the principal officials of the Nigerian government.

Mr. Stanfield: I hope the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the High Commissioner are not relying on the mail services for this purpose.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I hope we will not have to start using smoke signals.

Mr. Stanfield: Could the Secretary of State for External Affairs indicate to the house, in view of the obvious interest of other countries in co-operating in attempting to reach a settlement of the Nigerian problem, whether he, other members of the government or the government as a whole through its officials, has launched any new initiatives by way of talks with representatives of other countries such as Britain, Russia or France relating to the possibility of an effective cessation of arms shipments, and discussions leading also to a cessation of hostilities and effective negotiations.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government does not think any useful purpose would be served by taking an initiative in this regard. We have, however, discussed with a number of governments the possibility that an initiative might be taken by someone who could be fairly effective. As the hon. gentleman knows, quite a number of mediators have tried this from time to time, some of whom would I think be most suitable—such as the Emperor of Ethiopia, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and others. I believe it would be more useful for us to support their efforts than to take a separate initiative.

Mr. Stanfield: Can the Secretary of State for External Affairs indicate when he will be in a position to inform the house

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

concerning the suggestions his government has made to the government of Nigeria through its High Commissioner?

Mr. Sharp: I think it would be desirable to wait until after we have the reaction of the Nigerian government.

Mr. Stanfield: Can the minister give us any idea in terms of time?

Mr. Sharp: No; that does not depend only on us, but on the Nigerian government itself.

**ANGUILLA—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON
BRITISH ACTION**

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding the recent events which have taken place in Anguilla. In view of our membership in the Commonwealth and Canada's very friendly interest in the people of the Caribbean area can the minister give us any report on what is happening and whether he has had any information from the government of the United Kingdom regarding its intentions.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have been following these events very closely. The United Kingdom government informed us in advance of the steps to be taken by Britain to establish a commissioner in Anguilla. We were not of course consulted, since the measures proposed and now put into effect are clearly within the constitutional authority of the United Kingdom government acting at the request of and in agreement with the government of St. Kitts. We recognize the difficulty of the position in which the British government found itself. From the reports we have and the statements made by the foreign minister of Britain the situation now is that they are trying to instal a commissioner in Anguilla, with the task of working out a long term solution to the problems of that island which is acceptable to all concerned, including the people of Anguilla.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Secretary of State for External Affairs if Mr. Arnold Smith, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, is keeping in touch with the situation, and whether he is reporting and will be reporting from time to time to the Canadian government and other members of the Commonwealth regarding these developments?