

another. In fact, the parties were in general agreement on the principle but had difficulty arriving at a formula satisfactory to both sides. Nevertheless, in his telegram of March 10, the Quebec Prime Minister elevated this matter to a question of principle. In his telegram of March 12, the Prime Minister of Canada put forward a new formula which Quebec accepted. This text, which preserved the position of both parties, provided that the delegation would abstain only if there was disagreement on a matter relating to the exclusive domestic competence of the provincial governments. M. Trudeau explained very clearly that in the final analysis the vote of the Canadian delegation would be guided by Canadian foreign policy considerations.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE DELEGATION

27. The Quebec Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, in its first proposal, insisted that Quebec name the chairman of the Canadian delegation to the conference and the Canadian representative on the executive council of the Agency. Because the conference and the Agency represented an important foreign policy function and because both would deal with matters which would go well beyond those of exclusive provincial jurisdiction, this proposal was unacceptable to the federal government. It should be noted that the situation was not the same at the conference of francophone ministers of education, where the subjects discussed are, in Canada, in large part within exclusive provincial jurisdiction. Any line of reasoning purporting to put these conferences in the same category with those that have been held at Niamey is, for the same reason, without foundation.

28. The federal government, in its telegram of January 16, therefore, refused this demand made by Quebec. But, so as to take account of the importance of the province in Canada's French-speaking community, the federal government offered Quebec the position of "deputy chairman" of the Canadian delegation to Niamey, as well as to subsequent general assemblies, and on the executive council of the Agency. Quebec (its telegram of January 27) replied, this time asking for the co-chairmanship.

29. The Prime Minister of Canada proposed, in his letter of February 12, that Quebec assume the vice-chairmanship. The Prime Minister of Quebec held to his request for co-chairmanship until March 12, when he accepted as a total package the final proposals from Ottawa, which included the vice-chairmanship of the Canadian delegation to the Niamey conference. It should be noted, finally, that the agreement reached with Quebec does not exclude the possibility of a Quebec minister or senior official eventually--and depending on the circumstances--heading the Canadian delegation to subsequent general assemblies of the Agency.