

And, in particular, in the light of the provisions contained in the charter of the united nations, and the establishment by the economic and social council thereof of a commission on human rights, what is the legal and constitutional situation in Canada with respect to such rights, and what steps, if any, it would be advisable to take or to recommend for the purpose of preserving in Canada respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

That would be the part of our instructions that this would be based on. I suggested in the steering committee the other day—it was not accepted—that in part of the report which this committee makes, after it has recommended that a similar committee be set up at the next session of parliament, we should urge the government to make all necessary and possible inquiries with respect to that portion of our terms of reference which I have just read; if we move that recommendation then I think it would be incumbent upon the government, not to do, but to consider doing, what we recommend, through the ministry of justice. The Minister of Justice would procure all the enlightenment which he could possibly secure; the views of various bodies, including the attorneys general of the different provinces, and the law schools; and the committee which we expect will be set up next session would have that information before it, whether the committee has this same membership or a different one. I am inclined to think, based to some extent on the discussion that has taken place this morning, that that would be the best way for this committee to deal with the matter; that the government—since this committee is dying—make this inquiry through the ministry of justice and give that enlightenment to the committee when it meets next session.

The CHAIRMAN: If I start this correspondence—

Hon. Mr. TURGEON: Not as chairman of the committee, but as Minister of Justice.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, as Minister of Justice. If I start this correspondence the answer I will probably get back will be: What do you mean by bill of rights? Elaborate, explain what you are talking about?

Hon. Mr. TURGEON: I am not suggesting that our report order or recommend correspondence; I am suggesting that our report recommend that during the recess of parliament, when there is no committee in existence, that the government itself—I take it that it will be through the Minister of Justice—give all possible study and consideration to that part of our terms of reference which I have just read. That is a proper subject of consideration for the Department of Justice. It is faced with that all the time. This committee puts itself on record that step should be made in such a manner as to have something available for the committee next session. I am not saying that you should do it through massive correspondence. It is a matter of our making a recommendation that a study be made.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be perfectly practical as far as that is concerned. What about coupling with that Mr. Croll's suggestion that this committee, which is functioning now, would like to have these attorneys-general and heads of law schools communicated with now with an intimation that they probably will be called upon or invited to submit views when the committee is set up next year, and that they are being advised of that now so that they can give thought to it?

Hon. Mr. TURGEON: If the committee wants it I have no objection. I think the better way to proceed is to issue a report of this committee in the terms that I suggested urging the government to make the study contemplated in the terms of reference because this committee is a committee of parliament and will not be in session. It must be some living body that is making the study.