

Science Council of Canada

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for recognizing me for the third time today. It may be that in the consideration of certain legislation, because of certain criticism I utter, I may be looked upon by you as Daniel in the lions' den. Tonight, the lions are not in a roaring mood; to the contrary, they seem quite apathetic, considering the atmosphere of the house.

Nevertheless, I think the lions, in view of the principle of this bill, are not in the proper cage as consideration is being given to the establishment in Canada, under exclusive authority of the federal government, of a Science Council of Canada.

I am quite aware that few voices will be raised in this house to recall the provisions of the Canadian constitution, but as long as the courageous population of Sherbrooke riding continues to send me here—and I say courageous because they put up with me, as my colleagues do—I shall repeat my deep conviction that the administration of Canada cannot be conducted in utter chaos.

The provisions of the Canadian constitution must be adhered to. Now, under the confederation agreement of 1867, more precisely under sections 92 and 93, all questions of a local, regional, social, civil, religious and educational character have been given to the provinces. There is a special section of the Constitution, section 93, under which exclusive jurisdiction is given to the provinces in matters of education.

In 1937, Supreme Court Justice Duff ruled that such exclusive jurisdiction belonged to the provinces at all levels, elementary, secondary and university.

Such, then, are the guiding constitutional principles.

Oh, I know too well that during economic depressions and in wartime, the central government has crept into certain fields. But what has become unconstitutional is that in peacetime it stepped up this practice and its meddling in fields of provincial jurisdiction.

In short, the purpose of a science council is highly commendable. We have an urgent and immediate need for it; all the more so because we note that most of our scientists, graduating from our universities, are leaving the country, mainly for the United States. From 1956 to 1961, 1,239 Canadian scientists moved to the United States.

I admit that the problem is important, but I say, Mr. Speaker, that in this field, like in

[Mr. Patterson.]

many others, the government should proceed in conjunction with the provinces, according to the evolution of modern-day problems.

Preparations are being made for a June conference on education. Let us see how the central government proceeded in the field of education which relates to that of science a field in which provinces have exclusive jurisdiction under the Canadian constitution. Well, it has reached a point, where it grants prizes to students, announces scholarships, prepares a national conference on education in June, and is now meddling in a provincial field without the co-operation of the provinces. In my opinion, it should have waited to put the science council project on the agenda of a federal-provincial conference on educational and scientific problems, precisely in order to establish co-operation in the evolution of the Canadian constitutional life.

The mentality is not the same as it was in 1867. We admit that. On the other hand, I am against a government, whether provincial or federal, interfering in a field coming under another government's jurisdiction without co-operating with the latter.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I hesitate to interrupt the member for Sherbrooke when he is expressing with such eloquence his views on the resolution now under consideration, but I must remind him that the standing orders do not allow a member to make the same speech twice, and the member for Sherbrooke is now repeating substantially the same speech he already made in this house when we considered this bill at the resolution stage.

If the hon. member will refer to page 2869 of the official report, he will find there in substance the same remarks he has just made. Under the circumstances, I take the liberty of reminding him that he is not allowed, under the standing orders, to repeat remarks already made.

Mr. Allard: Mr. Speaker, I congratulate you on your excellent memory, because it is true I expressed certain views in more detail on another occasion, but at the time, I had put some questions to the minister (Mr. Drury), who is now looking at me sympathetically, but he left them unanswered then.

I shall put the question more precisely today. Is there any specific agreement or consultation, in short, any approval on the part of the provincial government in this matter, or has the minister received any protest?

I should like the minister to give me a specific answer to this question.