

*Inquiries of the Ministry*REQUEST FOR CONFERENCE ON NATION-WIDE
ANTI-CRIME PROGRAM

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. T. Pennell (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet perhaps I might deal with the question that was raised by the hon. member regarding a conference of attorneys general.

At the last conference of attorneys general the date of a future conference was left in abeyance. The law officers of the crown have had some correspondence with two attorneys general regarding a conference to discuss law enforcement and other matters. This exchange of correspondence is continuing and the matter of the conference is under consideration in terms of an agenda and timing. The extremely heavy commitments of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the centennial year is one consideration bearing on a date for such a conference.

LABOUR RELATIONS

RAILWAY DISPUTE—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT
ON CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. R. K. Andras (Port Arthur): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. Can the minister tell the house what progress is being made in connection with the contract negotiations with the brotherhood of railway trainmen?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the house that I have received the final report of the mediator, Mr. Goldenberg. The tentative settlement that he reported to me some time ago and which needed confirmation by the members, has now been confirmed by an overwhelming majority, some 75 per cent. Therefore this leaves only one of the major railway disputes outstanding, and the board of arbitration set up to handle this dispute will be meeting within a matter of a few days. This, of course, will be an organizational meeting. Hearings will follow.

[Translation]

CANADIAN CONSTITUTION

SUGGESTED STUDY BY PARLIAMENTARY
COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Heward Graffey (Brome-Missisquoi): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada.

[Mr. Pennell.]

In view of the statement made by the Quebec leader of the opposition, Mr. Lesage, as regards the necessity of modernizing our constitution, is the minister now willing to create a parliamentary committee on the constitution?

Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the hon. member for Brome-Missisquoi that the position of the government in regard to that question has not changed, that we still believe it is too early to set up such a committee.

[English]

HOUSING

REQUEST FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW
GOVERNMENT POLICY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Reid Scott (Danforth): I should like to address a question to our energetic Minister of Labour, who also spends part of his time looking at Canada's housing crisis. In view of the continuing housing crisis has the minister anything further to report on the statement by the Prime Minister that the government is considering new initiatives to meet the situation? If so, can the minister tell us what those initiatives will be?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Yesterday I refused to allow the question on these lines from the other side of the house. The question asked by the hon. member sins in the way the question asked yesterday sinned. It is too general and asks the minister to make a general statement. For that reason I do not think it can be accepted in its present form.

Mr. Scott (Danforth): By way of a supplementary question may I ask—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member cannot ask a supplementary question. He may ask a different question.

Mr. Scott (Danforth): I shall do that. Several weeks ago, answering a question of mine, the Prime Minister said the government was giving consideration to the creation of a national ministry of housing and urban affairs. Has such a decision been made. If so, what sort of decision is it?

Hon. J. R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I question whether the hon. member has quoted the Prime Minister correctly, but regardless of that, I wish to say that if and when the government has any