

Supply—Privy Council

courts against churches, schools and other organizations? Perhaps in this way their attention could be drawn to the fact that an infringement of copyright is a serious matter because a copyright is a very valuable piece of property which should not be stolen.

I believe that my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, asked a question the other day and has a motion for the production of papers in respect of the amendment, which so far as I know is still a proposed amendment, to the copyright law in the United States. As the President of the Privy Council will be aware, for many years there have been complaints that the so-called manufacturing clauses in the United States copyright law enable copyright infringements there notwithstanding the fact that this is a sort of international standard. The amendment which has been proposed is described by the Canadian Copyright Institute as introducing permissible plagiarism.

The suggestion has been made to me that as this matter is being dealt with by the government of the United States the question of the application of section 4(2) of the Copyright Act might be taken into account, because I believe the United States is not a signatory to the various Berne conventions but has protection in respect of copyright under subsection 2. This can apply only where the minister certifies that the benefit is on substantially the same basis as that given to its own citizens. If this section were made part of the law of the United States I wonder whether the United States would be giving substantially the same benefits. I doubt that it would be.

I suggest to the minister that some action might be taken to prevent this so-called permissible plagiarism of these manufacturing clauses which are in the legislation of our neighbour and which cause considerable harm to Canadian authors, publishers and printers.

[Translation]

Mr. Allard: Mr. Chairman, on consideration of the estimates of the Privy Council I am addressing through you the hon. minister responsible for the initiatives concerning federal-provincial relations.

We notice that, after a hundred years, we have become aware that the relations between the central and provincial governments need to be seriously and openly considered. For some years now, and such a practice does not depend solely on the hon. minister or his

government, instead of reviewing the situation and bringing in the required constitutional reforms, so as to define exactly those modern relations between the central and provincial governments, federal-provincial conferences concerning particular points are being held or commissions are created for the conduct of special studies; in short, we notice that the hon. ministers are trying to settle problems arising here and there by means of meetings that we describe as lobbying, since we, as legislators of this parliament, are not told about them and never know the results that may come from such confidential and secret meetings.

• (1:20 p.m.)

Well, Mr. Chairman, at the risk of being redundant and repeating frequently the same thing, I take advantage of the presence of the minister responsible for the Privy Council to ask him to allow as soon as possible the House of Commons and the Senate to review the Canadian constitution, in order to have the necessary reforms determined by a joint parliamentary committee.

I think that the fear which can be entertained and which prevents the establishment of that committee is perhaps that the problems are insoluble. I cannot explain in another way that hesitancy or indifference to comply with the request for the creation of a joint parliamentary committee on the constitution which would be supported by most members of the house, if they would state their views on the matter.

I am also convinced that this suggestion would be quite welcome as concerns the honourable members of the other place.

In spite of those provisions, in spite of the implied or explicit wishes expressed by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey) and by many other members of various parties, the present government—and I am not indulging in political partisanship, precisely because of my situation in this house—fails to answer this question and comply with this request, constantly deferring every opportunity to specify these essential reforms.

This is quite urgent, Mr. Chairman. You see, royal commissions have inquired and are still inquiring on all kinds of problems regarding federal-provincial relations and relations among ethnic groups from one province to another. We even have reports of those royal commissions. The first report of the Laurendeau-Dunton commission stresses the urgency of the problem in its findings and states briefly, following long discussions and