

ment has accordingly decided to submit to our Parliament, at the forthcoming session, an address requesting an amendment of the British North America Act by the United Kingdom Parliament which would vest in the Parliament of Canada the authority to amend the constitution of Canada but only in relation to matters not coming within the jurisdiction of the legislature of the provinces, nor affecting the rights and privileges of the provinces, or existing constitutional rights and privileges with respect to education and to the use of the English and French languages.

Such an amendment would give the Canadian Parliament the same jurisdiction over the purely federal aspects of our constitution that the provincial Legislatures already possess over the provincial constitutions, while giving both to provincial rights and jurisdiction and to the historic rights of minorities an express assurance of legal protection which we feel they should have.

We recognize that amendments may be required from time to time in the national interest of those provisions of the constitution which concern both federal and provincial authorities, and that it

would be desirable to devise a generally satisfactory method of making such amendments in Canada whenever they may be required.

The federal government would appreciate the opportunity of consulting with the governments of all the provinces on this matter in the manner most convenient to the provincial governments, at an early date after the conclusion of the forthcoming session of Parliament. If the provincial governments should desire, meanwhile, to have a preparatory conference of constitutional experts, we would be ready to have federal officials participate.

Our aim is to reach agreement, as soon as possible, on a method of amendment which will relieve the United Kingdom Parliament of an embarrassing obligation, and establish within Canada full and final responsibility for all our national affairs.

To this end we are inviting the co-operation of your government and the governments of all the other provinces of Canada.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) Louis S. St-Laurent.

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