

Inquiries of the Ministry

The hon. member then asked me a supplementary question which it would have been misleading for me to answer either with "yes" or "no". In this supplementary question he ignored the fact that the Canadian constitution can already be amended in Canada in purely provincial matters and in purely federal matters. There are, however, no means by which legislative authorities responsible to the people of Canada can make such amendments as may from time to time be required in the third area of the Canadian constitution, namely that part of it which is of concern to both provincial and federal authorities. This, therefore, I take it, is the point to which the hon. member's question referred. On this point the position of the government was stated in a speech delivered in Vancouver on July 9, 1953, by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) in the following words:

My third subject is the Canadian constitution itself. Because of our action after the last election, the parliament of Canada now has the right to amend the constitution of Canada, by itself, in all matters which are exclusively of federal concern. But Canada today is the only important nation which does not have the power to amend its constitution in all respects. We Liberals believe that there should be a method of amending the constitution in all respects here at home, whenever amendments are desired. But such a method must be worked out in co-operation with the provincial governments. I hope the day will soon come when the authorized spokesmen of all the provinces will be able to agree on a method of amending the constitution here in Canada which will give full protection to provincial autonomy, because I do not believe any rights given to the provinces by the constitution can or should be taken from them without the consent of the appropriate provincial authorities.

And it is the policy of the Liberal party, in working out a scheme for amending the constitution here at home, to make sure the utmost legal protection is given to our sacred constitutional rights with respect to education and the use of the English and French languages.

To this statement I have nothing to add at the present time.

Mr. E. D. Fulton (Kamloops): With reference to his answer, may I ask the Minister of Justice whether, since the conference last met in December of 1950, there have been any indications from the provincial governments or other sources that it would not be possible to arrive at a common agreement as to the method of amending the constitution in those fields to which he has referred?

Mr. Garson: Mr. Speaker, I would have preferred it if my hon. friend's question had been a little bit differently worded, in which case I would answer that since that time, to the best of my knowledge, no requests have been made by any of the provincial authorities for a reconvening of the conference in

[Mr. Garson.]

question. That does not answer my hon. friend in the precise terms in which he asks his question but I think it conveys the information that he wants.

SUPPLY**UNEMPLOYMENT—MOTION FOR EXAMINATION BY COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

The house resumed, from Monday, February 15, consideration of the motion of Mr. Abbott for committee of supply, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Green, and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Gillis.

Mr. B. R. Leboe (Cariboo): Mr. Speaker, you will recall that last evening I was discussing certain aspects of the unemployment situation, particularly management relations as they affect unemployment. At that time I mentioned that the purpose of plants and plant equipment is not only for management or operators to make money and make a profit but also so that people working in the particular industry can make a living.

Before I proceed with the next part of my address, I should like to make one thing perfectly clear. As a member of parliament I consider it my duty to represent all groups and no particular group to the disadvantage of some other group within an area, a province or the Dominion of Canada. I will admit that in doing so it becomes a little difficult at times to consider matters from the viewpoint of how they concern each and every individual. However, that is my stand, and this question must be dealt with fairly and squarely as it relates to everybody, whether they be workers in an industry, whether they be associated with it in some way or whether they be the managers.

As employment increases production increases, and people in the community all become better off provided there is distribution of the goods that are produced. It seems to me that so far we in Canada have not solved the problem of the distribution of the goods we produce. I hope to deal with that matter a little later, but in passing let me say that we should continue producing even if in the long run it means assisting those who are not as fortunate as ourselves and giving of our substance to those who are in need. We cannot blame workers for continually clamouring for higher wages and better conditions. The only way they have by which to increase their purchasing power is to ask for higher wages. Unfortunately, in looking back over the years and considering the fights that have been carried on for increased wages and salaries and the increases