

*Supply—Privy Council*

incumbent upon them. The Canada council would have to be something that would appeal to people because of the satisfaction they would receive from promoting the proper kind of development in that regard.

Canada has been and will continue to be fortunate in having Canadians who are prepared to work for their fellow citizens for that kind of compensation. But I found when I discussed the matter last autumn that I was not in a position at that time to bring to my colleagues recommendations which would allow that to be done. It is something which should not be delayed, something which should be done reasonably soon.

I think I have planted seeds which will germinate, and that it will be possible for the Canadian government, whoever may be at the head of it then, within a reasonable time to get the kind of men who would honour themselves and honour the position by undertaking the responsibilities of that kind of council.

**Mr. Knowles:** I take it that as soon as it is possible to secure the personnel the Prime Minister feels would do a good job in fulfilment of this recommendation, the government would be favourable to setting up the council?

**Mr. St. Laurent:** If I continue to be responsible for public affairs I shall be only too happy to recommend to my colleagues the establishment of a council as soon as I can put before them a set-up that would appear to be the proper kind.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

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**AFTER RECESS**

The committee resumed at eight o'clock.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Chairman, when the house rose at six o'clock the Prime Minister had just answered certain questions put to him by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre concerning the Canada council. Can the Prime Minister tell the committee this evening whether it will be necessary to have legislation enacted if there is to be a Canada council and, also, would he give us his views about the type of council that should be set up? He did not give that information when he spoke earlier.

**Mr. St. Laurent:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I have not obtained an opinion from the Department of Justice, but when I was considering it late last summer or last fall it was my impression that legislation would be required.

At that time I was trying to prepare a recommendation that I could bring to my colleagues in order to put in motion the preparation of that legislation; because we did make an endeavour to have all or practically all our legislation ready for the opening of the session.

I would not like to go into details as to the kind of council we should have, but what I had in mind was a council composed of ladies and gentlemen who had already made their imprint upon the mind of the Canadian public and whose prestige would be in keeping with the importance of the functions which they would have to perform. Those functions would be to act as the council that would operate under UNESCO, first of all; and second, to consider and have the initiative in all recommendations for grants for cultural activities in Canada.

I think it is important to have those matters dealt with on a basis that would be regarded by the public as entirely divorced from partisan politics. I think that if and when we place before parliament the recommendations of the Massey commission for national scholarships, those scholarships should be dealt with by this council. It should be to the council that the applications would be directed, and the council would pass upon the applications. I know there have been government scholarships—perhaps not federal scholarships, because the only ones I know of that are of federal origin are those awarded by the national research council—where there have been suggestions to the effect that in granting them there was political influence. I do not think that is desirable.

I think it is desirable to have all these matters handled by a body that would have the respect of the Canadian public to an extent that their recommendations—I will not say would not be questioned, but would not be open to suggestions that they were in any way subject to partisan political influence.

There are other matters, too. At one time consideration was given to a Canadian order or medal. I think the Canada council, if there should come to be one, should have the initiative of recommendations in that regard, and that neither the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra nor I would be asked to try to influence recommendations in that regard. I do not say here that parliament would want to set up a commission over which there would be no control whatsoever, but it seems to me that in those matters having to do with the cultural activities of the nation applications should be directed to an independent council, and that no initiative should