

Inquiries of the Ministry

Ottawa, February 27, 1965

Can the right hon. Prime Minister explain clearly to the house what the Minister of Justice meant by "conjugation" because no one in Canada understood what the Minister of Justice meant by that word?

We would like to know exactly what he means when he talks about "conjugation" in Canada which permits Canada to enter into agreements, while requesting the approval and consent of the province.

I wish that the right hon. Prime Minister would tell us exactly what is the kind of "conjugation" which his colleague, the Minister of Justice, intended to explain in Montreal during the week end.

[Text]

Mr. Pearson: Surely it is not proper for me in reply to a question on orders of the day to attempt to interpret what another Cabinet Minister has said. But I will be glad to bring the two hon. gentlemen together so that the misunderstanding on the part of the hon. Member for Villeneuve can be removed.

[Translation]

Mr. Martineau: Mr. Speaker, last Thursday the right hon. Prime Minister promised the house to examine the notes tabled to determine whether or not Canada was not previously advised of the agreement between Quebec and France.

[Text]

Mr. Pearson: The notes have been tabled. The hon. gentleman asked the other day whether there had been consultation between the two Governments in respect of these matters and whether there could have been such consultation in view of the fact that the dates on the notes were the same. May I remind him that the Secretary of State for External Affairs, as has already been placed on record in this House, was in touch with the authorities of the Province of Quebec as far back as last summer and that we have been in continual touch with them on these matters since that time. Then, of course, there could not have been signatures of this kind on the same date in the absence of prior conversations, and those took place.

Mr. Martineau: A supplementary question with reference to the answer the Prime Minister has just given. The letter forwarded by the French Embassy to the Canadian Government stated—and I would have to quote one or two sentences—

Excellency,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that two meetings were held, on November 4, 1964, in Paris, and November 20, 1964, in Quebec City, for the purpose of considering and developing a program of exchanges and co-operation between France and the Province of Quebec in the field of education.

On the same day the Secretary of State for External Affairs replied to this letter from the French Ambassador thanking the Ambassador for this information and using the words—

—in which you inform me that meetings were held in Paris and Quebec—

As well as—

—You kindly informed me also that the entente... was signed today in Paris.

And so on. My question to the Prime Minister in the light of this letter is this. Were there in fact any negotiations prior to the date of this letter, as stated by the Secretary of State for External Affairs about 10 days ago in this House?

Mr. Pearson: Yes; and perhaps I could restate what the Secretary of State for External Affairs said in this House on April 27. He said then that well before the accord between the Governments of Quebec and France was executed in February 1965, three way discussions took place among the officials of the Canadian, French and Quebec Governments with a view to working out a procedure by which the arrangements which Quebec wished to enter into with the competent French authorities could have international effect. At that time the Secretary of State for External Affairs added that he had been aware of the matter since the summer of 1964, and he pointed out that he had had discussions about it with the French Foreign Minister last December.

PUBLIC SERVICE

SUGGESTED REGULATIONS RESPECTING
CONDUCT OF SENIOR OFFICIALS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Barry Mather (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I have a question which I would like to direct to the Prime Minister. This is in line with the announcement over the week end by President Johnson of the United States that he is providing what he calls stringent new regulations for the strengthening of ethical conduct by high Government officials, and in particular he spells out measures to reveal gifts and other financial

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