matter of federal jurisdiction and pass a law accordingly, then if any conflict arises sub- of the Supreme Court of the United States made the final court, and ask them to say whether they are right or wrong. What a tremendous field is opened up by such a situation! Hon. members may feel I am painting a far-fetched picture and that no responsible government would attempt to circumvent the constitution by such an obvious ruse. I only remind you again, Mr. Speaker, that a similar attempt was made in the United States in our own generation, and it succeeded even though the alteration of the constitution of the Supreme Court of the United States is much more difficult than the alteration of the composition of the Supreme Court of Canada.

It is not that we are opposed to the idea of making the supreme court the court of final jurisdiction, but for these reasons we feel it would be more statesmanlike, more conducive to national unity in Canada if, before proceeding with this bill with its far-reaching possibilities, the government were to summon the conference to deal with the constitution and receive the views of the provinces, the other parties to confederation. With those views in mind, the government could arrive at a method of amending the constitution, including a constitution for the supreme court which would be acceptable to, and would have the confidence of, all parties in Canada. I believe I can speak for this party when I say that, if that approach were made, it would certainly have the confidence of this party and, I presume, of the party opposite.

I believe I speak for this party also when I say that to hurry this bill through the house, with all the potentialities I have described, before calling that other conference could not do otherwise than inspire a lack of confidence in the motives and procedure being followed by the government.

Up to the present time I have been dealing with the points advanced by the government in favour of considering this bill tonight, and also in support of the resolution for a six months hoist. I realize that the six months hoist sounds ominous. I know how often it is used with the intention of killing a bill. We are at the beginning of a parliament, however. No one on this side is questioning the fact that the government has received a mandate to carry out these changes. Supposing it is alleged that is our motive in suggesting a six months hoist, what good would be accomplished? There will be another session next year, another session the year after, and one the following year. The government majority is not going to shrink too quickly. In looking at the faces of the members opposite, I may say they all appear reasonably healthy. I see no reason to suppose that, during the life of this parliament, the government majority will vanish overnight. There will be plenty of opportunity to implement this legislation. It is not necessary to push it through as the first business of the first session. I believe there are very compelling reasons why it should be delayed until a constitutional conference can be held.

Government speakers have made reference to prominent Canadian statesmen and jurists who felt Canada should abolish appeals to the privy council. I should like to refer to one prominent Liberal statesman, who I believe was minister of justice at one time and who did hold that view while he was a cabinet minister in Canada. Upon further reflection, he changed his opinion. Edward Blake, the minister to whom I refer, spent years advocating the abolition of appeals to the privy council. Later, he went to England and spoke in the House of Commons, of which he had become a member. In referring to this matter in the British House of Commons in 1900 he used these words, which are reported in an article in the Canadian Historical Review, volume 27, at page 267:

> I speak from experience; because I know in the country whence I come, while a different set of circumstances obtains and there are different provisions, there is yet a written federal constitution; and it was found with us that where bitter controversies had been excited, where political passions had been engendered, where considerable disputations had prevailed, where men eminent in power and politics ranged themselves on opposite sides, it was no disadvantage but a great advantage to have an opportunity of appealing to an external tribunal such as the judicial committee, for the interpretation of the constitution on such matters.

I believe the remarks of Blake on that occasion are applicable to the controversies which have been raging in Canada within the last few years. Unfortunately, all the circumstances which he described have occurred and the feelings to which he referred have been aroused. In my view that is a statesmanlike utterance. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but I believe it represents the true state of the facts. In such a circumstance, it is no disadvantage but a very great advantage to have an opportunity of submitting your differences to a judicial body quite removed from the heat, passion and prejudice of the discussion which has taken place.

Let me make this quite clear, too, that in taking the position we have in advocating this six months hoist we reject absolutely the suggestion that has been made—without hesitation, I say improperly made, whether it be made by the Prime Minister or anyone else —that we do not believe the Supreme Court of Canada is capable of being the court of final jurisdiction. We have no such feeling.