

Supply—Privy Council

be elaborated, it is not for me to announce it without consulting my colleagues.

With regard to the remarks made by the hon. member for Sherbrooke about the federal-provincial conferences and the advisability to create a committee of the house or a joint committee of the house and the senate to examine the constitution as a whole or some aspects of constitutional questions, he recalled, in other words and in another way, a very important suggestion previously made in the house by the hon. member for Greenwood as well as by other hon. members, namely the hon. member for Peace River, and the house can be assured that this matter is now under very serious consideration by the Prime Minister who is mainly responsible for federal-provincial affairs. As far as I am concerned, when I was appointed President of the Privy Council, the Prime Minister told me that he was entrusting me with some definite responsibilities in that field, in order to ensure the co-ordination of several elements. But I want to assure the house that this matter has not been put aside and that neither the Prime Minister nor the government intend to overlook it without giving it, as I said, the most serious consideration. It will be understood that there are several factors involved and that there are decisions to be taken in a rather complex field. But I ask the house to take my word on what I have just said—I understand that, in theory, an hon. member's word must never be questioned, but there are times when some delays might imply that there will be others—because I repeat that the matter is now under consideration, not only serious but very active. I wish to thank the honourable members once again for their interest in the department and in the fields under my responsibility, and I can assure them that all the remarks and representations made, in their respective sectors, will be taken into serious consideration.

● (2:40 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, I should like to follow up by asking several questions about the activities of the combines investigation branch. Is it the desire of the President of the Privy Council that we ask these questions now or wait until we reach consideration of the vote relating to that particular branch?

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Chairman, I would prefer that hon. members wait until we reach consideration of the specific item. I have not

[Mr. Favreau.]

suggested that hon. members be limited in their questions under vote No. 1 in respect of matters which relate to the administration of the combines investigation branch because the administration of that branch is part of my responsibility. However, I think it would be preferable to discuss this activity when we reach the estimates of that branch. They are not included in these estimates.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, will the estimates relating to the combines investigation branch be dealt with when the estimates of the Department of Justice are called?

Mr. Favreau: I believe the specific items are inserted in the estimates of the Department of Justice. I propose to be here when we consider those estimates and when we consider the estimates concerning patents, copyrights, trade marks and corporations.

Mr. Howard: Am I correct in assuming that the estimates relating to the combines investigation branch and the Restrictive Trade Practices Commission will not be called today immediately following passage of the estimates now before us?

Mr. Favreau: They will be considered if the estimates of the Department of Justice are called today.

Mr. Howard: They will not be called today in conjunction with the estimates of the President of the Privy Council?

Mr. Favreau: That is right.

Item agreed to.

Ministers without portfolio—

5. Payment, notwithstanding anything in the Financial Administration Act or the Senate and House of Commons Act respecting the independence of parliament, to each member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada who is a minister for whom no salary or allowance in addition to the allowances under section 33 and section 44 of the Senate and House of Commons Act is provided (the acceptance of which shall not render such member ineligible or disqualify him as a member of the House of Commons) of a salary of \$7,500 per annum and pro rata for any period less than a year, \$7,500.

10. General administration including expenses of a pilot program, undertaken by volunteers, to advance social and economic development in community affairs, \$2,703,000.

Mr. Howard: This item refers without any formal title or legislative effect to a pilot project, the activities of The Company of Young Canadians, and I should like to express again a thought I put forward the other