

*The Address—Mr. Faulkner*

There is a widespread feeling that these ad hoc meetings, designed to arrive at solutions to particular problems, too often result in a hybrid of compromise and expediency fostered by political pressure. This in turn results in a *de facto* change, albeit sometimes subtle, in the distribution of powers as between the federal and provincial governments and indeed all levels of government. These particular solutions, with their inevitable exceptions for certain provinces, produce a marked confusion and lack of clarity in our federal system. Change seems so often to come about through a process of attrition rather than through a process of conscious, long term decision.

It has been suggested by some people, including the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker), that the time has come for a national constitutional conference. Such a conference would beyond doubt pose tremendous problems and create several severe tensions within our federal system. All of us are aware of the magnitude and difficulty of such an undertaking. However, I believe it is time that we as Canadians came to grips with our most difficult and fundamental problem, our *raison d'être*. Other nations have done it, and have proven themselves equal to the task. Therefore I should like to suggest or, probably more discreetly, I should like to hope that this government would give serious consideration to the calling of such a conference.

● (5:00 p.m.)

The task of drawing up a new constitution commensurate with our present level of political, economic and historical development should, in the preliminary stages, be handled by experts, experts in constitutional law, experts in our economic and political history. At the intermediate stages of development, this new constitution should be approved by both the federal parliament and the provincial legislatures. In the final stages it should be ratified by the people. This will be an immense and traumatic undertaking but in the long run I suspect that it might be the condition of our survival as a nation.

I come now, Mr. Speaker, to certain other provisions of the Speech from the Throne. As we know, the members of the opposition have been extremely critical of this document. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) in particular—I am sorry he is not here but I can understand why—has been critical and scornful of it. He has described the Speech from the Throne as a puerile and pusillanimous piece of repetitive propaganda. In my

opinion, Mr. Speaker, far more puerile is the person who in mock rage scorns the honest and well intentioned efforts of others who fail completely to agree with his own political point of view. Far more pusillanimous is the man who fears to give credit to an opponent when credit is due. A much fairer and more perceptive assessment of the Speech from the Throne was contained in an editorial which appeared in one of this country's finest provincial daily newspapers. I refer, of course, to the Peterborough *Examiner*. If I may be allowed, I should like to quote from this editorial which appeared in the edition for Wednesday, January 19:

Essentially, the program that has been laid out for this session of parliament is a continuation of the Liberal government's far-reaching and, in many ways revolutionary development of Canada's social, health and welfare legislation. Already such measures as the Canada Pension Plan, the war on poverty and the Canada Assistance Plan have begun changes in Canada's social structure, and the relation of government to it, which are probably more radical than any since the second world war.

In my view, much of what is proposed in the Speech from the Throne is of immediate interest and benefit to the people of my riding. The important emphasis given to education, particularly the interim grants to higher education announced by the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), will be warmly received by all of those who are interested in the development of Trent University. This university is in many ways unique in Canada. We from Peterborough derive considerable satisfaction and pride from the achievements of this young university. In passing I should like to point out to hon. members that the name of the first residential college of Trent University will be Samuel de Champlain, a name which we realize is revered by all Canadians but particularly French speaking Canadians.

The second annual review of the Economic Council has drawn our attention to the severe shortage of manpower with higher educational and skill qualifications. The plan announced in the Speech from the Throne for vigorous federal action in this area of manpower training is most welcome. It has been my view always that much greater use could be made and will be made of on the job training. In order to accomplish this the co-operation of management and labour would have to be secured. From the many discussions I have had with these two groups, I suggest that such co-operation would be forthcoming.