

REPORTS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

SATURDAY, July 12, 1947.

The Special Joint Committee on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms begs leave to present the following as a

THIRD REPORT

To obtain a clearer concept of its duties, your Committee, as a preliminary step in its inquiry, resolved its Order of Reference of May 26 into three divisions, namely,—

- (1) To consider the question of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the manner in which these obligations accepted by all members of the United Nations may best be implemented;

And, in particular, in the light of the provisions contained in the Charter of the United Nations, and the establishment by the Economic and Social Council thereof of a Commission on Human Rights;

- (2) What is the legal and constitutional situation in Canada with respect to such rights;
- (3) And, what steps, if any, it would be advisable to take or to recommend for the purpose of preserving in Canada respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Deputy Minister of Justice was heard in regard to the legal and constitutional position in Canada insofar as human rights are concerned, while an officer of the Department of External Affairs gave evidence respecting the obligations assumed by Canada as a member of the United Nations.

The Director of the Division of Human Rights, Department of Social Affairs, United Nations, appeared and supplied information relative to the activities of the United Nations in the matter of human rights.

Contained in your Committee's minutes of proceedings and evidence are copies of documents relative to the subject-matter of the Order of Reference.

At the outset, it was apparent that at the present session only preparations could be made for a subsequent detailed study of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Consequently, your Committee has invited the attorneys-general of the provinces and the heads of Canadian law schools to furnish views and opinions on the question of the power of the Parliament of Canada to enact a comprehensive Bill of Rights applicable to all Canada.

It is recommended that early next session a joint committee be appointed to resume consideration of the task assigned to your Committee.

A printed copy of the minutes of proceedings and evidence is appended.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. L. ILSLEY,
Chairman.