

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

government supporters in the Senate were consulted before this course was entered into? Secondly, has he any means whereby such changes could be made or brought about constitutionally without the consent of the Senate?

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** In reply to the first question, Mr. Speaker, there has been consultation on the constitutional question on several occasions in caucus and caucus committees. We have discussed the future of the constitution, and all the subjects that were raised as a result of last February's federal-provincial conference.

I was not, of course, in a position to spell out in detail to caucus what propositions we were making, because they were considered confidential, but the caucus was encouraged to discuss all aspects of federal institutions, including the Senate, and the subject was discussed. There were many senators present at the time as they always come to our caucus meetings.

On the second question, Mr. Speaker, this is a legal opinion for which I am being asked, but I would say that I see no desirability of proceeding with such a reform of the Senate without ample consultation with the Senate, and without giving the Senate a chance to express its views on the subject.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the discussion that took place in the Senate yesterday afternoon, led by Senator Connolly, a former leader of the Senate, and other senators, to the effect that this was the first knowledge they had of such ideas being held by the government, what has the Prime Minister to say?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I would think the Prime Minister should say what he feels should be said in this regard on another occasion, rather than in an answer to a question at this time.

[*Translation*]

**DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE**  
SEATING ACCOMMODATION FOR CERTAIN  
MEMBERS

**Mr. Gérard Laniel (Beauharnois):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Prime Minister.

Could he tell us whether apart from the seats allocated to hon. members, proportionally to their party representation, to attend

the federal-provincial conference, there will be seats for other members not chosen to be part of the official delegations of observers?

**Right Hon. P.-E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, there will be no other seats in the room itself, since all available ones have been, as mentioned by the hon. member, allocated among the various parties. But in an adjoining room, a closed television circuit will enable the members of all parties to follow the conference in all its details. It will be, I think, room 371 in the West Block.

[*English*]

**ROYAL FAMILY**

CANCELLATION OF SALUTE TO  
QUEEN MOTHER

**Mr. Stan Schumacher (Palliser):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the universal affection with which the Queen Mother is held in this country, will not the government reconsider its decision to cancel the honour accorded her of a 21 gun salute on the occasion of her birthday?

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Is this part of the just society?

**Mr. Speaker:** While the question is being considered the Chair will recognize the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain.

[*Later:*]

**Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a supplementary question to the Prime Minister based on the question asked a few minutes ago by the hon. member for Palliser. His question was based on a Canadian Press dispatch which stated that in response to a cabinet order—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member knows very well that he has to ask the question directly. If he wants to ask a supplementary question he should do so without quoting a newspaper story or report, on which his question is based.

**Mr. Hees:** Mr. Speaker, with great respect, the Prime Minister was unaware of this important situation and I was explaining it to him. Let me rephrase my question. In view of the cabinet order issued last Friday cancelling the royal salute on the anniversary of the coronation, the birthday of Prince Philip, the