

*Supply—Privy Council*

comments, that Canada is going through a serious crisis originating in Quebec.

It is very easy for some people or some newspapermen to overlook this serious and fully considered finding of commissioners who did a fine job, travelling from Halifax to Vancouver throughout the country, in order to question and hear the views of Canadians about the problems of 1965 and 1966. And in their findings, they tell us: a serious crisis originating in Quebec is impending, because Quebec is not satisfied with the experiment of the Canadian confederation from a constitutional, fiscal, cultural, educational and economic point of view.

When I refer to Quebec, Mr. Chairman, I have no particular political party in mind. Some members should dismiss the thought that when I am speaking of the Quebec government, I am not only referring to the Union Nationale, because I made the same pleas a few weeks and a few months ago when the Quebec government was headed by Hon. Jean Lesage and his team on constitutional questions and on reforms that many people in Quebec and in other provinces, are urgently asking for.

Well, I may be limited, I may have very little and very mediocre brains, but I cannot sincerely understand why the present government should refuse. They would increase their stature in the eyes of millions of Canadians if they agreed to the first step of setting up a parliamentary committee on the Canadian constitution, a joint committee, a large committee with over 25 members, as usual, so that all members or at least a good number could sit on it, and if it is set up, I am here and now asking the government to accept my request to sit on the committee, because if so many Liberal representatives, so many Conservatives, so many from the Ralliement Cr ditiste, and so many from the Social Credit members are appointed, I should not like for all that to be left aside. I should like to sit on that committee in order to make my own small contribution, to make sincere suggestions to bring all Canadians closer together and to set down precisely and clearly, an open, definite and clear-sighted, federal-provincial relationship, so that we may stop going about blindfolded as we have been doing for a number of years. In fact, we are now proceeding by disparagement, behind the scenes, by huddles, by commissions of inquiry or by federal-provincial conferences restricted to definite points that in no way settle the over-all problem.

[Mr. Allard.]

The federal-provincial conference on education has just been postponed because another government has been elected in Quebec. Well, I do not see in what way the preceding government was different from the new one, because all governments follow along the autonomy lines which was always followed under Mercier, Gouin, Taschereau, Duplessis, Sauv , Lesage and the others, as well as under the Union Nationale. Why then a postponement after an election? It leaves a bad impression in the country. A federal-provincial conference on the matter of education is postponed, because of a particular result in a province.

That is very bad from the psychological point of view, Mr. Chairman, very bad. It will be impossible to settle problems and bring Canadians together in a brotherly way, if we always proceed that way, by particular calculations, by occasional diplomatic actions. It would be a good thing if, once and for all, the hon. members of this house and of the Senate had an opportunity to gather around a table and to examine today's problems in the spirit of 1966 or 1967.

For my part, Mr. Chairman, I see two mental habits in this country. We must be realistic. Much as I belong to one mental habit, I respect the mental habit of other Canadians. I respect it fully, and I am ready, with other Canadians who belong to my mental habit to set up a mechanism so that we can, as a country, as the great country that is Canada, pool all our energies to develop our country domestically and economically, and stop quarrelling about details and about indefinite and imprecise constitutional matters concerning joint taxation fields. But there is no desire to get together and define once and for all those fields of taxation.

Well, I for one, am confident that as politicians in this parliament and with all the suggestions which may come from the outside, we will have the necessary courage, an adequate dose of common sense, to sit down honestly around a table, in order to define and rewrite, if you want, the Canadian constitution.

And let there not be confusion over my words. Some speak of a new Canadian constitution; others talk about rewriting or redrafting the Canadian constitution; others talk about amendments. No matter the words used, it is the idea that counts. The interpretation is not always the same in French as it is in English. What has to be done is to arrive at a constitutional text in 1966 which will