

As a preface to the Report the Commission quoted a passage from St. Augustine defining a nation: "A nation is an association of reasonable beings united in a peaceful sharing of the things they cherish; therefore, to determine the quality of a nation, you must consider what those things are". From this felicitous quotation and from evidence given in the Report it seems apparent that the Commissioners proceeded throughout their task on the assumption that in the arts and letters may be found a useful yardstick of a nation's culture and, further, that the arts and letters of any country can be important unifying factors. This theme occurs frequently throughout the Report; for example, in discussing the theatre and music in Canada their unifying influence on the country as a whole is emphasized. It seems evident, too, that in surveys of the various federal institutions and agencies which were reviewed particular attention was given to the manner in which these institutions might best serve the country as a whole.

Implicit throughout the Report seems to be the conviction that Canadian institutions which serve the national interests are logically entitled to some measure of support from the Federal Government. For example, recommendations were made concerning grants to Canadian universities and for the establishment of a council the principal duty of which would be to strengthen voluntary organizations concerned with matters reviewed by the Commission.

The Report of the Royal Commission is presented in two parts; the first consists of a survey of the many and varied subjects which the Commission was instructed to consider, and the second deals with the 146 recommendations presented under eight principal headings. It is proposed here to summarize the recommendations concerning national museums, federal libraries, public records and archives, historic sites and monuments, aid to universities, national scholarships and the establishment of a council for the arts, letters, humanities and social sciences. For accounts of the recommendations of the Royal Commission concerning the National Gallery, the National Film Board, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, see pp. 347, 348 and 352, respectively.

The survey of the national and local museums found that Canadian museums lag far behind those of comparable countries. The Commission recommended that the present National Museum of Canada be given more space and more funds and that its principal exhibits be confined to Canada's geology, botany and zoology, and to the natural resources on which the primary industries of the country are founded. Further, the creation of a new Canadian Historical Museum was recommended for the exhibition of various historical collections now in the custody of the Public Archives, the Canadian War Museum and certain departments and agencies of the Federal Government. The Report also recommended the creation of a Canadian Museum of Science as well as national botanical and zoological gardens in appropriate regions of Canada.

The overcrowded condition of the Library of Parliament was examined and it was recommended that most of the collection be removed for safe-keeping, leaving space for adequate working library services and suitable stacks. The Commission further recommended the immediate establishment of a National Library.

Concern was shown regarding the extent to which the files of most government departments are congested with inactive or worthless documents and records and the Commission noted the very considerable storage spaces which the Department of Public Works must provide for great quantities of outdated records. The Commission therefore recommended that the responsibility of the existing Public Records