

The Address—Mr. Caouette

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful to the house for these few supplementary minutes I need to conclude my speech.

Mr. Speaker, the speech from the throne is crammed with these joint programs. We are opposed to the policy of joint programs for many reasons. I have just given one; here is another.

It is always Ottawa who takes the initiative of legislating in various matters, especially with regard to winter works affecting the municipalities. This is a direct encroachment upon the constitution. Ottawa controls every action taken by the Quebec government within an exclusively provincial jurisdiction. The Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour are well aware of that.

Ottawa still levies direct taxes in the province of Quebec, contrary to subsection 2 of section 92 of the constitution. It is the same with regard to the other provinces.

This opting out formula does not give the province of Quebec a greater fiscal freedom and increases in no way its taxing powers.

According to the policy of the Ralliement Creditiste, the province should opt out of all these joint plans and regain its full freedom in the field of taxation. Ottawa should give up these joint plans and let our province look after its own management. Ottawa should withdraw and respect the autonomy of the provinces.

Because of those one-sided deals and also of the greater needs of Quebec, the province, which has to look after a whole nation, a whole culture—its priority needs in the field of education, development of its natural resources, compensations to give its labour force which cannot find employment—is now forced to levy greater taxes than the other provinces.

In conclusion, let me quote the statement delivered by the premier of British Columbia, Mr. W. A. C. Bennett, on November 25, 1963, at the federal-provincial conference in Ottawa:

The Fathers of Confederation wished to create provincial governments that would be independent in the fields concerning their respective responsibilities and able to co-operate effectively to the national growth. To this end, the efforts on the part of the provinces, in time of peace, since 1867, have constantly been directed to the maintenance of their effective taxation powers without double taxation for otherwise, the powers of the provinces to govern independently would no longer exist.

In fact, Ottawa granted his request and in January 1965, Quebec was able to opt out of 29 of the 46 joint programs in which it participated. As a compensation, it got an amount of \$220 million which included a percentage of the personal income tax, the equalization payments and cash adjustments.

On February 27, 1965 before the Montreal Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Favreau) had this to say on the subject:

To avoid this type of "trusteeship federalism" our government in Ottawa has suggested that the provinces opt out of the joint programs and take over themselves their administration. Quebec, we know, intends to opt out of about 75 per cent of those programs (in terms of dollars)—but without lowering the national standards set by the programs—this constructive and flexible system has been called "co-operative federalism".

What should be our reaction?

What is most ridiculous in this whole situation is the fact that the federal government which called trusteeship federalism this joint program scheme is now prepared to set up some more.

For instance, the speech from the throne mentions such measures as a cost sharing area development program; a cost sharing plan to assist the re-employment of workers; a cost sharing plan for fuller rural development or "rural displacement"; a joint plan under which people can be assisted on the basis of their need; a joint plan for urban renewal; a joint plan for public assistance; a joint plan for health services; a joint plan for improvement of the dairy industry.

The speech from the throne is stuffed with these joint plans which mean a trusteeship over the provinces by Ottawa, the control of provincial expenditures by civil servants from Ottawa and the end of provincial autonomy.

We of the Ralliement Creditiste disagree with this policy of joint plans because they mean a double bureaucracy, one in the provinces and one in Ottawa. The people are fed up with paying for bureaucrats in Canada. What the people need today, is the right to live in peace in their own country, Canada.

• (3:30 p.m.)

[*Text*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron, High Park): Order. I have to advise the hon. Member for Villeneuve (Mr. Caouette) that his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron, High Park): Do hon. Members give unanimous consent?