

*Dominion-Provincial Relations*

to a substantial degree, the benefits the provinces could derive from the proposed measure.

**Mr. Fleming:** That point was dealt with yesterday in my remarks.

**Mr. Lesage:** No, it was not. I checked *Hansard* very carefully, and I find it was not dealt with.

**Mr. Fleming:** You had better read it again.

**Mr. Lesage:** My question is, is this 13 per cent going to apply as the floor for 1957-58? I ask that question because under the policies followed by the present government everybody knows that the revenues of the government in 1958-59 are bound to decline.

**Mr. Fleming:** You mean as a result of a reduction in tax rates.

**Mr. Lesage:** Yes, coupled with the economic difficulties which were brought about by the policies of the present government.

At the beginning of my remarks I said the Minister of Finance had misled the provincial governments and the country as a whole on Saturday last. Well, I really do not blame the Minister of Finance. He is such a good friend of mine I would rather be tempted to pity him. The person who is to blame is the Prime Minister, who scuttled the federal-provincial conference.

**Mr. Fleming:** Nonsense.

**Mr. Lesage:** Why did he do that? What was the reason he gave for scuttling that conference? He said it was because we were asking questions of his government in the House of Commons, which clearly it is our duty to do. That was the only reason the Prime Minister gave for indefinitely postponing the federal-provincial conference. How ridiculous and frivolous it is. What is the Prime Minister doing now? According to what we hear in the house and see in the press of the country he is planning to scuttle parliament itself.

**Mr. Churchill:** Nonsense.

**Mr. Lesage:** He is planning to scuttle parliament before the estimates are voted.

**Mr. Fleming:** Order. Mr. Chairman, this is not a discussion on the estimates, and it is not a discussion on wider issues. This is a discussion surely on a resolution before the committee. Can we not confine it to that?

**Mr. Lesage:** The proposal before us should be part of the budget because it goes to the whole financial set-up of the country; and surely, sir, I am entitled to say that I am afraid the Prime Minister is about to scuttle this parliament by bypassing the estimates.

[Mr. Lesage.]

**Mr. Fleming:** Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, we are not discussing any budget or the estimates. We are discussing this resolution, and I remind my hon. friends that these payments are not a charge on this year's revenues. They have nothing to do with this year's budget. They will have operation in the fiscal year that commences April 1 next.

**Mr. Lesage:** Mr. Chairman, I will leave the subject of estimates by commenting that I hope this government is not trying to bypass the vote by this parliament of the estimates so it could spend hundreds of millions of dollars by warrant and be prepared to spend additional hundreds of millions of dollars on projects about which parliament knows nothing at all.

**Mr. Fleming:** Mr. Chairman, may I ask for a ruling? Surely this has gone beyond all reasonable limits.

**The Chairman:** Order. The hon. member will appreciate that he cannot anticipate another discussion, and I will ask him to confine his remarks to the resolution before us.

**Mr. Lesage:** Very well, Mr. Chairman, I will respect your decision; but I will comment that the Minister of Finance should have presented this resolution and other proposals for expenditures and amendments to the taxing laws by bringing down a budget. Surely I can say this.

**Mr. Fleming:** No, you cannot. You are clearly out of order.

**Mr. Lesage:** However, I am not blaming the Minister of Finance for not presenting a budget, because I really believe he was prepared to present a budget.

**Mr. Sinclair:** He said he was.

**Mr. Lesage:** Yes, he said so, but I believe he was prevented from doing it by the electoralism of the Prime Minister. The pre-occupation with electoralism on the part of the Prime Minister is the reason this government is taking the actions it is taking now.

**An hon. Member:** Where is your leader now?

**Mr. Lesage:** He just returned from Vancouver. Where is yours? I might say, too, that my leader made a very profitable tour, and I believe it will have its effect not only in British Columbia but also in Manitoba. When my leader speaks he is listened to because he does not dictate to the people what they should do. We are not following the practice that is followed by this government, we do not dictate, we are attempting