

Supply—Labour

not apply under the present legislation. That is not what we offer. We keep both feet on the ground and we shall not imitate the political expediency of the Liberal party; we shall not follow them on that road.

Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to clear up that point for the time being, but if my hon. friend insists, I shall come back to it.

Mr. Deschatelets: Mr. Chairman, I think the moment would be well chosen for the minister to explain why, during the last election campaign, he and his friends kept on criticizing all joint plans and promising they would abolish them all, and why now, in spite of such statements, they have maintained them.

Mr. Flynn: Mr. Chairman, during the last election campaign, I never said a word about abolishing joint plans. I could send my hon. friend the publicity pamphlets I had distributed in my constituency. What I did say was that our government was in favour of a return to maximum fiscal responsibility for the provinces. That is what we have achieved. My hon. friend is talking through his hat when he attributes to the Conservatives from the province of Quebec the attitude he has just described.

An hon. Member: We will prove the contrary to you.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Chairman, I should like to say a few words following the remarks made by the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Flynn).

I think the people, especially the people of the province of Quebec, will be anxious to read the remarks he has just made. I find it strange that the government members from Quebec, including the minister, the Secretary of State (Mr. Dorion) and the Minister of Transport (Mr. Balcer), after four and a half years in power, should say to us today: the Liberals are to blame for the fact that these joint programs must continue to exist.

Well, I remember the stand taken by our opponents during the 1957 and 1958 electoral campaigns, and even before. I do not have here the statements made by the ministers, but I remember, among other things, that during a television broadcast the Minister of Transport, speaking about the joint programs and the trans-Canada highway in particular, said that they violated the autonomy of the provinces. I hope that the minister will not contradict me on that point.

Mr. Flynn: I am sorry, but I did not hear him.

[Mr. Flynn.]

Mr. Bourget: Well, the minister is not the whole party but he is well aware of the impression that was created; he knows that what has been said in the province of Quebec in 1957 and 1958 was to the effect that all these joint programs encroached upon the autonomy of the provinces. The minister may deny it, but I believe that the whole population of the province of Quebec admits it is true.

Well, once again, I say that during the elections of 1957 and 1958, you stated that you had found a means to put an end to those joint schemes. Yet, you have been in power for four and a half years, and have changed absolutely nothing. It is not up to the Liberal party to change the situation or legislation. You are the ones in power at this time, and you are responsible for the administration. Well, why don't you change those schemes?

What are you waiting for? Are you waiting to be defeated in the next general election? And that, indeed, is what will happen.

As far as we are concerned, Mr. Chairman, nobody can accuse us of having swerved from our course. Indeed, we have always expounded a policy—

Mr. Tremblay: Now, that is a good one—a very good one indeed.

Mr. Bourget: Mr. Chairman, I again hear the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Tremblay). I am told he will rise in a moment, and I hope he will be present—

Mr. Tremblay: Certainly.

Mr. Bourget:—when the question is put. I hope his colleagues from Quebec on the government benches and himself will not scurry out when the vote is taken. If they vote against that item, we will be able to see the division which now exists within the Conservative party. On the other hand, if they vote in favour of it, they will deny not only their past, but all the speeches they made against those joint programs.

Mr. Tremblay: Not at all.

Mr. Flynn: Mr. Chairman, I formally deny that, during the last election, the Conservative party in the province of Quebec as a whole adopted an attitude of complete opposition to the joint schemes, and it is, anyway, very easy to establish that many of those joint plans were accepted by the province of Quebec—

Mr. Bourget: Which plans?