

CONFERENCE ON AUTOMATION

Leading economists, manpower experts and sociologists from the United States and Canada, as well as several Western European countries, are scheduled to participate in the Conference On The Manpower Implications of Automation, from December 8 to 10, at the headquarters of the Department of State in Washington, D.C. Mr. Allan J. MacEachen, Canada's Minister of Labour, will be an honorary chairman of the conference.

Sponsored jointly by the Organization For Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the U.S.A. and Canada, the meeting will examine the effects of automation on employment and unemployment, the nature of jobs being created and eliminated, and the steps required to ease the effect of technological change on workers.

Participants are being drawn from government, labor, industry and education. Formal papers will be received before the conference by those involved, as a first step toward its main feature - a free and open discussion by all participants.

Among the Canadians contributing papers will be Dr. W.R. Dymond, Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour, Mr. J.P. Francis, Director, and Dr. G. Schonning, Assistant Director, of the Economics and Research Branch, Department of Labour, and Mr. G.G. Brooks, Director of Manpower Consultative Services, Department of Labour.

LEARNING TO BE A CANADIAN

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Perhaps one of the most important lessons I have learned, particularly during my years in government as a civil servant and as a minister of the Crown, is that there are many ways, direct and indirect, of achieving a given Canadian objective. I can think of many examples; the most recent, and an excellent one, is the Canada Pension Plan. In order to achieve uniformity and portability, a federal scheme applying across the country is obviously the logical method. Quebec decided to have it own plan. Yet, by concurrent legislation in similar form in Quebec and at the federal level, there can, and I am confident there will, be a uniform and portable Canadian pension plan in operation. Perhaps this should be called "contracting-in"....

CO-OPERATIVE FEDERALISM

Whatever the Constitution may say, now or later, there cannot be a neat and tidy division of responsibility between the federal and provincial authorities

CORRIGENDUM

On Page 1 of the November 25 issue of CWB, a tribute to the late Pandit Nehru by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Martin, was attributed in error to Prime Minister L.B. Pearson.

valid for all time. This has been apparent for years in the field of taxation, where agreements between the two levels of authority are now negotiated periodically.

It is becoming more and more apparent in my own field of trade and commerce. The provinces all have departments of trade, and it makes good sense that the activities of these departments should be co-ordinated with federal activities. While the Federal Government has, and must have, exclusive jurisdiction over external trade, so that it can bargain effectively on behalf of Canada, I did not think it was a derogation from the rights of Canada to invite the provinces to exchange views with us before the formulation of Canada's position in the "Kennedy round".

In the fields of labour, of industry, of agriculture and most of all in the fields of health and welfare, the need for co-ordination and consultation between federal and provincial authorities is growing from year to year simply because the area of government responsibility is extending. Co-operative federalism is a practical necessity.

UNITARY STATE A DREAM

There are some who dream about the simplicity of a unitary state in which all decisions could be made at the centre. After observing Canadian government at close range over a long period of years, I am not one of them. I believe our federal structure is indispensable to national unity; not only so, but it has served our purposes remarkably well. Ours is in fact a flexible system, which, by ingenuity and goodwill, can be adapted to fit most circumstances in this wide and varied country. I doubt whether it has interfered with the attainment of any important Canadian objective or any important objective of the people of any province, including the Province of Quebec. The Prime Minister of Canada was surely right when he said "those who preach a centralizing doctrine in the name of unity weaken unity and could destroy it"....

The vigour with which Quebec is speaking for French Canada is a healthy, promising development, greatly to be preferred to the protective, inward-looking attitude that was characteristic of this part of Canada when it lacked confidence....

There is growing goodwill towards Quebec in the rest of Canada...In order to retain and enlarge that goodwill, they have only to continue to play as vigorous a part in the promotion of Canadian interests as they properly play in the promotion of the interests of this province.