

A rigid partitioning of the functions of the state is also impossible. Man's life in society constitutes a well-integrated whole. We can, in the abstract, differentiate certain of its sectors and consider them separately, but no such dissection is possible in practice. Human problems, whether economic, social or cultural, are becoming more and more indivisible and their solution often exceeds the limits originally defined. Questions of jurisdiction in areas of common interest, and problems such as unemployment, will keep cropping up, and solving them in the best way possible will call for joint government action. In other words, governments within a federal system can rightly consider themselves independent from one another in certain fields but in many others they must admit their interdependence if they are fully aware of their responsibilities toward the common welfare of their people.

This is exactly the fundamental idea Mr. Jean Lesage expressed at the Federal-Provincial Conference in 1960, when he stated:

"... though sovereignty excludes dependency, it requires constant co-operation and often the joint action of the various sectors of government; otherwise many problems cannot be solved satisfactorily... In short, the Province of Quebec intends to exercise its full rights in the fields falling within its jurisdiction while remaining, at the same time, aware that all the governments of our country are undeniably interdependent."

The second lesson our political development teaches is that interdependence, which is so essential to federalism, has never been marked by a system of consultation and co-ordination of governmental policies. This explains, to a great extent, why our federalism oscillated from one extreme to another, from a régime of protectionism to one of quasi-confederation (one extreme gradually provoking its opposite) without finding a happy medium.

Basic Flaw in Original Federalism

In a little-known but much criticized book I published in 1954, I lamented this basic flaw in our federalism when I wrote:

"Canada has not yet found a satisfactory solution to the problem of inter-governmental relations. In fact, no serious attempt has been made to solve it... Federalism in Canada does not have any permanent body dealing with inter-governmental relations... Federal-provincial conferences have been held only sporadically and almost always convened to try to settle intricate problems that have often not been clearly defined... There is little hope of quickly settling the serious problems raised by contemporary federalism by the method of occasionally bringing together people who are unaccustomed to working together, who often believe that they have divergent