

the provinces agree with the central government to give Canada a social security and legislation even superior to that of any other country. If I thought that an agreement between the provinces and the dominion would in the slightest way interfere with the charter which guarantees the rights of the provinces or would restrict the jurisdiction specifically reserved to them under the constitution, I would not hesitate—and neither would any member conscious of his responsibilities—to denounce such a deal.

Moreover, in matters of taxation, never has the federal government asked the provinces to accept an amendment to the constitution with the object of depriving them of any legislative power granted them by the British North America Act. Never has any power been taken away from the provinces without their consent.

Mr. TREMBLAY (Dorchester): Hear, hear!

Mr. COURNOYER: This agreement is temporary and limited exclusively to taxation, the levying of taxes and their distribution in such a way as to permit the contracting parties to fulfil their obligations under the constitution in the general interest of the taxpayers.

It is essentially a free contract the effects of which would allow the nation to go through the post-war period as smoothly as it is possible to expect.

The unanimity of the provinces in assisting in this task of reconstruction will ensure, not only the country's future, but their own individual prosperity.

I do not wish to insist any longer in seconding the motion moved by the hon. member for Prince. In any event we shall have an opportunity of judging on their merits the various pieces of legislation forecast in the speech from the throne. But I wish to congratulate more particularly my hon. colleague for Prince (Mr. MacNaught) on his kind words with respect to a town situated in my constituency, the town of Sorel. I take pleasure in pointing out to the house that we have the privilege of building in Sorel, at the present time a ferry-boat which will probably be the most modern and the best in the world. A tribute has thus been paid to the worthiness and efficiency of our workingmen. I am not now in a position to make a formal statement, but I may be able to say, before long, that this boat will be ready by next spring.

The government is formed by a group or party which not so long ago received from the electorate a mandate to administer this

country through the difficult post-war period. The vote of confidence thus given by the electorate has been, more than anything else, a vote of confidence in the personality and vast experience of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister of Canada holds every record; since Mr. Cardin's death he has become the dean of the House of Commons, he has been his party's leader ever since 1919; he has led the cabinet ever since 1921, with only a brief interval from 1930 to 1935. In short no political leader has ever enjoyed or enjoys today such a fine and impressive reputation. The contribution he has made to the building of the Canadian nation has been magnificent. At the age of 72 he continues to lead his country with a sure and able hand towards security and national unity. May Providence grant him longer years still for the fulfilment of his goal and the attainment of his ideal. He needs the cooperation of all. Whatever our race, our religious beliefs, our province, we also have a duty to our country. The confederation of 1867 was based on the intelligent cooperation of all provinces in the making of a prosperous Canada under national unity.

The government does not ask for anything else.

(Text):

Before concluding my speech I should like to address a few remarks to my English-speaking colleagues in the house. I am proud of being a French Canadian. Our religious and political leaders from the first days of civilized America worked constantly for an honoured and prosperous Canada.

You English-speaking Canadians are also proud to belong to a great race which was the first to proclaim democratic liberty in the world. This Magna Carta of yours is one of the most glorious monuments of free humanity. You are the authors of democratic regime in Canada. We both have our traditions and our faith protected and guaranteed by our own constitution and laws.

We have built up a national conscience which is endowed with the characteristics of our two great races. Together we have taken great steps in the building of the Canadian nation. Our two communities pray for understanding and friendship. No more is there any reason for any dispute, even minor ones, between us. Lustrous British Columbia, the Rockies, the western prairies, Ontario with her great resources, our great St. Lawrence river, our Quebec, Gaspé, the region by the sea which we French call "Acadie", all Canada without any exception whatsoever