

*The Budget—Mr. Dorion*

of Quebec has never failed to abide by section 93 in its entirety. Therefore its position is absolutely unassailable and every effort of this government, in co-operation with the government of Quebec, should aim at finding as soon as possible a way to settle this thorny problem and to make it easier for the province to exercise its powers most freely in this field.

What could be that solution: to change the equalization formula so that it might include amounts meant for university education in the province? Increase the 13 per cent exemption for provinces that would like to collect on their own the amounts needed for that purpose? It is certainly not my responsibility to find a concrete and definite solution; the responsibility is solely that of the authorities concerned. However, those are proposals that could be looked into and discussed in a spirit of fairness and good will in order to insure peace and harmony, those essential conditions to sound national unity.

Soon there will be, Mr. Speaker, a federal-provincial conference of provincial and federal treasurers. In my opinion, it is an excellent way to collect data on the fiscal problem in Canada, to get a detailed knowledge of the various factors and thus, to pave the way to broader discussion. It is indeed, I believe, the first step to a conference between the Prime Minister and the provincial premiers, a conference which would be beneficial and which, we trust, would be the preliminary to a larger and more comprehensive agreement between various authorities which, under our constitution, must participate in their own fields, to the administration of the future of our country.

I wish, Mr. Speaker, that the conference will discuss every aspect of that problem of federal grants to university education. I know there can be no doubt of the right hon. Prime Minister's intention to find a solution in keeping with the spirit of the constitution. Last May, speaking to the Canadian Teachers Federation, whose members had come here to ask the federal government for additional help, he rejected their request in strong and accurate terms which deserve to be quoted:

The sections of the British North America Act, —said the right hon. Prime Minister—which grant to the provinces the exclusive jurisdiction in the field of education must be kept unchanged. Such constitutional rights are not to be amended.

Then, in the same line of thought, he continued by giving this remarkable advice which all hon. members, of whatever party, may well follow:

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All Canadians must agree on the necessity of respecting the constitution in that field.

Those remarks are sufficiently clear and definite to eliminate any doubt on the intentions of the present chief of the government on that point. As far as his co-operation is concerned, I only have to refer to the following portion of his opening speech at the 1957 conference, which reads:

(Text):

The purpose of each of us here today is to come together in a spirit of amity to endeavour, while maintaining the spirit of the federal and provincial governments, to discharge their respective constitutional functions. The spirit of confederation requires that provincial governments by their demands upon the federal treasury shall not undermine the strength it requires to sustain its own proper burdens, and that the dominion government shall not take advantage of the legitimate needs of the provinces to undermine the essentially federal nature of our constitution. We are here at this time primarily to listen and to learn. We want to learn about your problems, those problems that bear upon ours. We want to hear your suggestions. We, of course, know something from the public record of the past. We wish to hear directly from you of things "as they now are and as you see them."

(Translation):

Under the circumstances, it was not surprising to read in the January 1958 number of the review *Relations*, the following observations by the Reverend Father Arès, whom an opposition member quoted the other day:

For the last fifteen years, fiscal conferences have practically all followed the same pattern: the federal government drew up a plan, called the provinces to Ottawa and submitted this plan to them, saying that, under the circumstances, it was the best for everyone. After some attempts at resistance, the provinces mostly resigned themselves to comply with the wishes of the federal government. Five years later, the same thing happens again.

Later on, the same writer, drawing conclusions from that 1957 conference, added:

During that meeting, the government thoroughly practised the art of making friends. It was all kindness, prepared to go to any length of generosity, it kept the provinces in the limelight, treating them as equals, urging them to talk freely, to outline their grievances and submit their plans; it listened to them with sympathy, without missing any opportunity of trying to convince them of its goodwill, with the result that the conference went on in an atmosphere of utter cordiality. The first lesson to be drawn from this is that in a federative regime, the democratic methods, more concerned with men than with things, are still those that lead to the best and most lasting results.

I repeat, Mr. Speaker—and I close my remarks with that statement—that, faced with the importance of that problem of federal grants to university teaching; faced with the