

The Budget—Mr. Knowles

are in search of work in order to find which way they voted. No one can say that it is fair to deny employment to those who, by their democratic right, voted as they saw fit. But under our provincial administration at this time, it is considered to be an unpardonable sin to have voted other than Progressive Conservative.

In my opinion, co-operation is much the same as trade. It is never a successful venture if confined to a one-way street. There should be no restrictions and there should be no barriers. If those from my province who are now seeking co-operation will approach, not with the olive branch in one hand and a stiletto up their other sleeve but with the frank and honest determination to co-operate, they will find that I am prepared now, as I have always been, to meet them halfway. Any lack of co-operation between our province and the federal government at this time is the result of the ruthless, narrow, selfish attitude taken by federal and provincial Conservative members from that province.

In conclusion I will say this, Mr. Speaker. So far as co-operation is concerned, in future my conduct will to a great extent be governed by that of my Conservative friends from New Brunswick. If they are sincere in their desire to co-operate, they will find that I am prepared to meet them halfway. But if they want to carry on as they have carried on in the past, and if our provincial government want to carry on as they have carried on in the past, there is no chance of co-operation.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on what happened in this house yesterday afternoon. I think all hon. members will agree that we had one of the most interesting afternoons that we have had in the House of Commons for a long time. It was delightful; it was entertaining; it was a top-rate performance.

The first two speakers or, if I may call them that, the principal speakers during the afternoon were certainly in top form. We were pleased to see the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) in such vigorous good health once again. Whether or not hon. members in various quarters were in agreement with what he said, the way in which he said it was enjoyed by all.

Similarly, I think we must extend a word of compliment to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin). Realizing that his speech was made immediately after the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition, I believe we can agree that he did quite a good job of debating.

[Mr. Stuart (Charlotte).]

But, Mr. Speaker, after one has said that, and when one looks back on the day's performance, one cannot do otherwise than ask the question: Where were we when it was all over? I ask that question both with respect to the speech made by the Leader of the Opposition and with respect to the speech made in reply by the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

For the most part, these two speeches dealt with the dominion-provincial conference of 1945 and with the consequences that flowed or failed to flow from that conference in the intervening years. The Leader of the Opposition spent most of his time seeking to justify whatever stand it was he claims he took at the conference in 1945. He spent a great deal of time castigating the government. But I listened in vain for any statement from him as to where he and his party stand on the important issues that were raised at the dominion-provincial conference of 1945 and which, as a matter of fact, are not yet finally resolved.

It seems to me that the country has a right to expect from the leader of Her Majesty's loyal opposition not only the criticism of the government which it is the responsibility of that leader to render but a statement as to where he and his party stand on the issues of the day.

But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the same criticism must be levelled at the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin). He made a speech, some parts of which I want to analyse in a moment, which in the main had to do with the past. It was an attempt to tell us that from his point of view the government has implemented, as he alleged, to the extent of two-thirds the proposals made by the federal government in 1945. It can be said for him that he at least, because he was talking about the 1945 proposals, found it necessary to refer to a number of important issues that are still before the country, but he did not tell us where we go from here. He did not tell us what the federal government proposes to do about those issues which as yet have not been finally or satisfactorily resolved.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I said about the Leader of the Opposition I must also say about the gentleman who spoke for the government yesterday, namely, that I think the people of Canada have the right to expect from people in these responsible positions not just an attempt to justify their past but a statement as to what their position is with regard to the future.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare indulged in a most intriguing bit of arithmetic. I note that the hon. member who