

Income Tax

the provinces of certain taxing privileges or sums of money, I am convinced that provincial first ministers act in good faith. I believe that they would agree with their federal counterpart to give the federal government a fair share of the profits they derive from their natural resources. However, I repeat that it is unacceptable that a decision be made in Ottawa without consulting the provinces. This is definitely not the way we shall conceive a workable federal system, and we shall not as long as the provinces do not feel perfectly at ease within the present system.

I know that similar remarks have been made on several occasions. The failure of the government to listen carefully to the claims of the provinces always makes me sad. There again, we know for a fact that the provinces put forward some claims with regard to the coming federal-provincial meeting, but Parliament is being required and urged to pass this bill which infringes upon very important provincial jurisdictions.

So, as I said, decisions are made here in Ottawa without any consultation and then the provinces are asked to discuss the problems we are now facing. I wonder whether that is not a strange consultation to have before a decision is made.

Later on, one will wonder what happens either in the province of Quebec or in Alberta or in British Columbia. One will wonder why some provinces are not satisfied, why certain provinces are putting in so many claims to the Ottawa government, why we have those pitched battles between the federal government and the provinces.

We of the Progressive Conservative Party will be accused of concentrating our efforts on protecting Alberta's interests.

● (1610)

For once I was very happy to support the claims laid by Alberta's government which was carefully protecting its provincial rights. It was not only a responsibility, on its part, but a duty to protect the rights it has acquired a long time ago.

I think one could also ponder on what is going on in Quebec, on the thousands of Quebecers who are gradually losing faith in this federalism that is being called profitable or viable. Attitudes such as the one shown by this government are things that discourage not only the provincial premiers or the ministers responsible in that field but also the electors in every province. We still have the opportunity to think seriously about what we are going to do this afternoon. Either we say yes to the provinces and show our respect for provincial jurisdictions or, on the contrary, we say to the provinces that everything must be settled in Ottawa. And then we ask them to embrace the system, to have a feeling of freedom.

I venture to think, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members will assume their responsibility, which is not necessarily to support a political party or to see if it could be defeated or not in the House. I think that every member has formally committed himself to serve his constituents' interests at every opportunity. I think that today, we have a unique opportunity to serve the interests of the provinces without prejudice to the national interest.

[Mr. La Salle.]

Then, at the last minute, I appeal for much more understanding and open-mindedness than were shown until now with regard to certain clauses of the bill that are sure to displease the provinces if this legislation is passed.

This government had promised us a just society and started consultations. I hope they will meet their commitments much more honestly than they are doing presently.

The hon. member for Lévis (Mr. Guay) made a few remarks. I wish he had spoken to this bill. I should have liked to know if, as a Quebecer, he intends to answer the Quebec ministers who expressed their views. I would have liked to know if, like many others, he intends to replace the Quebec first minister, because there are little problems at present. It is obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the Quebec government made representations. The minister, Mr. St-Pierre—

Mr. Raynald Guay (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I hear a member from Quebec talking about confusion in the Liberal party and saying that things are going badly. As a supporter of the Union nationale I think that for him things are not only going badly, it's all over. The Union nationale does not exist any more in the province of Quebec. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member asks me to speak on behalf of Quebecers. When I have the decency to speak on behalf of Quebecers—they are only three on their side to speak on their behalf and I wonder how he can show such a lack of common decency—Mr. Speaker, I shall try to say something that makes sense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order please. The hon. member will agree that his point is only an argument, I therefore recognize the hon. member for Joliette.

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, further to my previous remarks, I again urge the Quebec members to take a stand on this fundamental question, namely the respect of provincial jurisdictions. I say to the hon. member for Lévis that despite the large deputation from Quebec in Parliament, if the members betray Quebec's interests today, they will betray them again by passing this legislation which deprives the provinces of a fundamental right. The hon. member from Lévis knows it. He dares not speak on this bill because he will have to follow the party line. That's it!

Mr. Olivier: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order please. The hon. member for Longueuil rises on a question of privilege.

Mr. Olivier: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle) made a personal attack on me, first as a Quebecer and second as member for Longueuil. When he thinks others betray their fellow Quebecers because they do not belong to the Progressive Conservative party, the member for Joliette goes too far. I suggest the hon. member for Joliette should be asked to withdraw his remarks, otherwise the matter will have to be referred to a committee.

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, I would indicate right now to the hon. member for Longueuil (Mr. Olivier) that when I