

Dominion-Provincial Conference

conference of all heads of institutions in Canada, as has been suggested by other members. We would like to know now what the opposition thinks about the Canadian government's attitude and about the purpose of the conference itself. Do they believe in a total review or do they believe in a piecemeal approach? What do they think about the monarchy and about the demands concerning the monarchy that have been made by some of the provincial governments?

Mr. McGrath: You are the government. What do you think about it?

Mr. Trudeau: We have stated what we think about it. If the hon. member wants me to read the position papers of the federal government I will do it, of course, but it would be more useful if the opposition took a constructive approach. What do they think about the Supreme Court, and how do they think it should be reformed in a way acceptable to the provincial governments? How do they propose to deal with the suggestions made by some provinces concerning the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court? What do they think about the reform of the Senate about which we hear so much talk in the house? How would they deal with it? Would they abolish the Senate?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Hear, hear.

Mr. Trudeau: I would point out to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that he is not reflecting the position taken by all the provincial governments. They do not want the abolition of the Senate; they want a Senate which would in some way reflect the provincial and regional interests in this country. What do the opposition think about this difficult problem? What do they think about the national capital, a matter on which we have made great progress?

An hon. Member: You have the mandate.

Mr. Trudeau: We have taken a position on these matters which we have developed in conjunction with our caucus. We have developed it over a period of some months and now we want to know if the opposition have different thoughts on this because we feel there is a division of opinion on this subject. For example, we have made proposals concerning the Supreme Court, and they are quite clear. We have heard from the Conservative benches suggestions for a constitutional court which would be different and apart

[Mr. Trudeau.]

from the Supreme Court. The Leader of the Opposition has not taken this position but apparently some members of his party from Quebec have. I would like to know the position of the opposition to use as a guideline.

What is the opposition's position on the charter of fundamental liberties which we want to put into the constitution? Do they agree with the position of some provincial premiers that there should not be such a charter and that we should leave these matters to the statute laws, or do they agree with the line of thinking which was so ably presented in the house a few years ago by the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker)?

What about linguistic rights? Here again we are in a very delicate and difficult area. There have been some taunts from the opposition on this subject but we have not yet obtained any constructive suggestions. This whole question brings us into the area of the two-nation theory which was put before the conference by the prime minister of Quebec in his brief. We know that this two-nation theory was expounded at the Montmorency conference of Conservatives a couple of years ago, and we also know that it does not mean the same thing to all members of the opposition. However, we from Quebec know that in the mouths of most of those who ran for the Conservative party in Quebec it means something quite different from what is meant by the Leader of the Opposition.

We would like to have some clarification on this subject, especially as I was told that a few days ago that eminent Conservative constitutional expert, Mr. Camp, said that at Montmorency the Conservatives hammered out a policy which is exactly the same as ours. I was very glad to hear that, but I am sure that this is not the message that got across to the province of Quebec when the Conservative candidates were speaking there last spring. This subject is all the more urgent as it was brought up again earlier this week in the brief of the province of Quebec. In that brief the Quebec Government also included provisions for a special status. We know that the New Democratic Party last year moved a non-confidence motion in the government because we did not support a special status. This is the time for the N.D.P. to state clearly what they mean provided, of course, they know what they mean.

An hon. Member: You should know because you were one of them not so long ago.