

The government was careful in all its correspondence with the provinces not to suggest that the consent of the provinces was essential. We were anxious not to create a precedent which would bind the Federal authorities in seeking future amendments.

At the same time it was thought desirable to avoid, if possible, the development of a Dominion-Provincial controversy, particularly at a time when the whole field of Dominion-Provincial Relations was being reviewed by a Royal Commission.

The first approach to the provinces

The government therefore decided to enquire whether the provincial governments would be agreeable to an amendment being made to the British North America Act empowering the Federal Parliament to enact unemployment insurance legislation. Accordingly, I addressed letters, in this sense, to the Premiers of all the provinces on November 5th, 1937.