

ces have been a major source of friction and have a negative impact on the daily lives of all Canadians. These problems demand equal attention.

6. *A realistic time-frame* — A comprehensive review is unlikely to be successful if arbitrary deadlines are imposed. A fixed and rigid timetable is unrealistic and does nothing to contribute to the harmony and goodwill necessary to complete a process of constitutional review.

The substance of constitutional reform

1. *The consensus reached by premiers in 1976* — Provinces agreed to advance, again, the 1976 consensus, which has not received an adequate response from the Federal Government. That consensus constitutes a useful starting point for discussions with the Federal Government in crucial areas involving the distribution of powers, and represents a positive contribution towards the resolution of significant problems.

Quebec said that, while committed to its option of sovereignty-association, it could generally go along with the 1976 consensus and most of the other constitutional points raised in Regina. Quebec went on to state that this approach falls within the mandate of the Quebec government to reinforce provincial rights, within the present system, and also illustrates some of the minimal changes required to make the federal system a serious alternative in the forthcoming Quebec referendum.

The 1976 consensus covered a number of areas of concern: immigration; language rights; resource taxation; the federal declaratory power; annual conference of First Ministers; creation of new provinces; culture; communications; Supreme Court of Canada; the federal spending power; regional disparities and equalization.

2. *Other areas of consensus* — In addition, the premiers, in the course of their discussion in Regina, have reached agreement on a number of additional substantive matters, on which federal views are invited:

- abolition of the now obsolete federal powers to reserve or disallow provincial legislation;
- a clear limitation on the federal power to implement treaties, so that it cannot be used to invade areas of provincial jurisdiction;
- the establishment of an appropriate provincial jurisdiction with respect to

fisheries;

- confirmation and strengthening of provincial powers with respect to natural resources;

- full and formal consultation with the provinces in appointments to the Superior, District and County Courts of the provinces;

- appropriate provincial involvement in appointments to the Supreme Court of Canada.

3. *Other subjects* — Further, there was a consensus that a number of additional matters require early consideration:

- the federal emergency power;
- formal access of the provinces to the field of indirect taxation;
- the federal residual power;
- amending formula and patriation;
- the delegation of legislative powers between governments.

4. *Elements of the constitutional amendment bill* — With regard to the federal constitutional amendment bill, premiers expressed a number of substantive concerns, in addition to the points noted previously.

Ultimate authority necessary

Provinces agree that the system of democratic parliamentary government requires an ultimate authority to ensure its responsible nature and to safeguard against abuses of power. That ultimate power must not be an instrument of the federal Cabinet. The premiers, therefore, oppose constitutional changes that substitute for the Queen as ultimate authority, a governor general whose appointment and dismissal would be solely at the pleasure of the federal Cabinet.

The provinces regard the House of the Federation, as proposed, as unworkable.

Some provinces support the principle of constitutional entrenchment of basic rights; while others believe that, under our parliamentary system, individual rights are better protected by basic constitutional traditions and the ordinary legislative process.

Provinces are concerned over Section 8 of the federal bill and its potential interference with important provincial legislation respecting land ownership and other matters.

Some premiers noted that the proposed language guarantees go substantially beyond earlier proposals, and feel that practical difficulties may be encountered in their provinces, particularly in respect of provincial government ser-

vices and courts.

All premiers expressed grave concern that Section 109 of the British North America Act, concerning provincial ownership of natural resources, has not been carried forward into the proposed new constitution.

Premiers are concerned that Section 32 of the constitutional amendment bill is an attempt by the Federal Government to acquire from the provinces jurisdiction over offshore territories and resources.

Premiers feel that, if there is to be a preamble, it should be short, clear, and precise. A statement of aims, if any, would best be included in the preamble.

Premiers stressed that all these issues, and others, will require careful and detailed discussion with the Federal Government.

Grain and oilseed outlook

Canadian wheat production is expected to be about 20 million tonnes this year, just slightly more than last year's harvest. Agriculture Canada economists expect the average price for Canada's top grade of wheat to be above \$140 a tonne, higher in 1978-79 than it has been in the last two years.

This year's coarse grain production in Canada is tentatively forecast at 21.1 million tonnes, 5 percent below last year's total. With the expected carryover, total supplies are expected to be up 2 percent at 28.3 million tonnes.

Prairie plantings of barley and oats are down this year and corn production is also projected to be about 4 percent lower than it was last year. Ontario corn prices will closely parallel U.S. prices through the summer months.

World supplies of edible oils are expected to increase in 1978-79. Supplies of high protein meal will remain unchanged during the first eight months of the new crop year.

Since there will be little growth in demand for edible oils during the coming year and feeding of high protein meal will remain at last year's volume, world edible oil prices are expected to decline while high protein meal prices will stay about the same or decline slightly.

Canadian soybean prices may be about \$230 a tonne this autumn. Rapeseed prices in Vancouver are expected to be about \$260 a tonne in 1978-79.