

Federal-Provincial Relations

Of that \$225 million, Mr. Speaker, \$37 million is a loan from the federal government to the province, and that loan is repayable both as to principle and interest. That money must be deducted from the \$225 million, which means that the federal government will be contributing \$188 million. Prior to signing the agreement in 1968, Ottawa was contributing to the province by way of joint federal-provincial programs a total of \$8.5 million per year. In any event, we would have obtained that \$8.5 million a year. If Ottawa were to continue contributing \$8.5 million per year, and presumably that contribution would have continued, then Ottawa, at the end of that time, would have contributed apart from the plan altogether 15 times \$8.5 million, or \$127.5 million. Mr. Speaker, that \$127.5 million cannot be considered as new money, because it would have come to us in any event. We were getting those payments even before the plan was signed. So, from \$188 million of new money we ought to deduct, I maintain, that \$127.5 million. This reduces the federal government's contribution to \$60.5 million.

We are told that approximately 400 people will be employed to administer the plan. Many of these have already been hired, at salaries ranging between \$15,000 and \$25,000 per year. Let us be conservative about the salaries these people will be paid and average those salaries at \$10,000 per year. If 400 people are to be employed, according to the figures the government has given, and each of them will earn, say, \$10,000 a year, over a 15-year period their salaries will amount to \$60 million. So, we are actually reduced to \$500,000 of new money that Ottawa will use in the implementation of the plan. The rest of the money, Mr. Speaker, is to be provided by the provincial government. I say very sincerely that the provincial government just will not be able to provide it. Where are we to get \$500 million, the amount the province needs to put up if the plan is to be put into operation?

Today, our population stands at 110,000 people. The province's direct debt now is \$110 million. That represents a direct debt of \$1,000 for every man, woman and child residing in that province. Servicing this debt is costing us over \$11 million per year. So, the first thing the provincial government must do, before implementing the development plan and before raising the \$500 million it will need to raise, is pay \$11 million to service the province's present debt. Mr. Speaker, our people just cannot afford to do this because, as I said before, opportunities for employment are not available to them. I seriously suggest if the government wants to do something truly beneficial for our province and other provinces which may be in a similar situation, it must encourage industry to come to our province and provide employment opportunities for our people. That is what we want, Mr. Speaker. If the federal government were to do this, it would be truly doing something to improve federal-provincial relations.

• (1710)

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I consider it my duty to support today the motion which reads as follows:

That this House regrets the government's responsibility for the deterioration of federal-provincial relations as a result of its uncompromising attitudes and policies, its unilateral decisions

and its refusal to meet legitimate needs of Canadian provinces, mainly through not making available to them the funds required for development, economic expansion and welfare of the population.

Mr. Speaker, here is a motion that affects a basic problem and a great truth. Canadian federalism has suffered great setbacks under the government headed by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). As a matter of fact, since he came to power four years ago, this government has continually trampled on a number of principles, namely co-operation, good will, consultation, that are absolutely necessary to insure sound and dynamic relationships between the Canadian confederation partners.

For example, let us take the 21st of June to show how to what extent these relations have deteriorated. In fact it is a sad picture given to the public reading these newspapers. In *Le Devoir's* edition of June 21, it was stated:

"The longshoremen cannot expect anything from Cournoyer", said Mr. Trudeau.

What interest would the Prime Minister of Canada have in "belittling", accusing and besmirching a Quebec minister belonging to his own party? Are such ridiculous accusations liable to promote good relations? Certainly not.

What qualifications does the Prime Minister of Canada have that allow him to assess the qualifications of the provincial minister?

Moreover, Quebec is not the only target of such charges. Let us remember what the Premier of British Columbia said. I will refrain from repeating such coarse words, which are not likely to promote good relations between the partners in our Canadian Confederation.

In *Montréal-Matin's* edition of June 21, an article signed by Joseph Bourdon, and another one on a different subject by a Mr. Clément Brown, illustrate the problem brought on by an uncompromising policy and unilateral decisions which disregard priorities and the administration of the provinces.

The *Montréal-Matin* issue of the same date carried an article entitled: "Pour reprendre le débat constitutionnel, la position du Québec devra être claire." (*In order to resume the constitutional debate, Quebec's position will have to be stated clearly*). In the mind of the right hon. Prime Minister, a clear position means perhaps one entirely in agreement with what he says, if not no dialogue is possible.

Some may say that it is not so, but I will remind them of the many unsuccessful constitutional conferences and especially of the last one in Victoria, which amounted simply to an exchange of threats. *Le Devoir* of the 21st of June gives details of a report by the Canadian Committee of the International Conference on Welfare, in which it is stated plainly that Canada's welfare policy is confusing because there is no co-ordination between the different levels of government concerning their social security programmes.

Page one carries an article on social security entitled: Marchand seeks to induce Munro and Castonguay to resume dialogue.

Good for Mr. Marchand!

But who broke off the dialogue? How? Why? In what context.