

Dominion-Provincial Relations

upon the time of the committee, simply like to conclude the answers to the questions which were put to me by two hon. members, and then I could resume my seat. This would take a matter of a few minutes.

What I was on the point of saying, Mr. Chairman, when I was interrupted was that if the Minister of Finance at any time found that the agreement which he had made with the foundation was not satisfactory he could change that agreement. If he changed that agreement and its provisions, including the definitions which I have put on *Hansard*, then the provincial government would again, in its place, have to change the arrangement made between itself and the universities and re-negotiate with them an entirely new arrangement. So, it seemed to me, in answer to these questions, that it was quite evident that this bill contained a clear element of compulsion which had been introduced into this federal legislation with regard to education or, more concisely, to the relations which exist between the provincial government and the universities in the province.

It is for that reason I am astonished that the members of the Quebec Conservative party have not noticed this anomaly or, having noticed it, have not raised it at all. So far as we are concerned we feel that according to our constitution a provincial government is completely free to deal with the universities in the province as it sees fit. It is also a matter of concern to us that it should be the business of the federal government to interfere at all, as it seems now quite clear the federal government will be doing, in the field of education by the wording contained in this bill. That is why we cannot accept the provisions that I have mentioned in the bill. We wonder how it is that the Quebec Conservative members can accept them now after the criticism they made against the definitions, when in no way they were binding upon the provincial government in its relations with the universities in the province.

There are two other points I should like to make but I do not want to trespass unduly on the time of the committee. I shall reserve them for the discussion under clause 2.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, it is quite obvious that the hon. member has wandered far under the guise of carrying on a general discussion such as is permitted on the first clause of a bill when in committee. I do not intend at this moment to follow him in his detailed discussion of the individual provisions and detailed terms of clause 2 of the bill. If I were to do so I would be following him into an open and very clear breach of the rules. I will simply say at this moment, reserving in detail my remarks by way of

[Mr. Chevrier.]

reply until the proper time when you call clause 2 of the bill, that I do not think I have heard, in 15 years in this house, such a jumbled misunderstanding of any provision of a bill as I heard in this committee on the part of the hon. member for Laurier this evening. I do not like to say that; I regret saying it, but it is a fact.

Mr. Chevrier: That does not deal very well with the point, does it?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): I pointed out that I will be pleased to deal with this in detail when we reach clause 2 of the bill. I would not wish the remarks of the hon. member, who has strayed so far from clause 1, to be interpreted as having any validity by reason of their not being mentioned at this point.

I simply make a general observation and hope, in the meantime, the hon. member will really read the provisions of the bill and in that way correct for himself this hopeless jumble in which he finds himself as a result of completely misreading and misinterpreting the plain provisions of this bill.

Mr. Chevrier: I have read it very carefully, and I have spent a lot of time on it. I am surprised that is the only answer of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): That is not the only answer; the answer will be given at the time it ought to be given when clause 2 of the bill is under discussion, and when the hon. member ought to have made his remarks.

(Translation):

Mr. Leduc: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with much interest to the various members who participated in this debate. Furthermore, I have listened carefully to the outline given by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming).

I fail to understand the attitude of the Minister of Finance, that of the Solicitor General (Mr. Balcer), as well as that of the Quebec premier.

I should like to know from the Minister of Finance whether there is some agreement between the government of the province of Quebec and the federal government. I read in yesterday's press a report of a speech made in Joliette by the Quebec premier and I have here that part of it which will interest the house. Here is what it says:

Mr. Barrette said that there was never any question of an agreement with Ottawa, but a decision taken by an autonomous government to settle a thorny problem. Thus, by proudly expressing our will, we finally succeeded in recovering for Quebec \$10 million in taxes every year, and the \$25 million lying dormant in Ottawa coffers.

We even got the federal government to admit that it will entirely vacate the field of education, thus finally winning out after years of struggle.