

The Address—Mr. Pearson

throne, that the government has no intention of calling such a conference. We know that instead the government has announced to the provinces the extension of the existing temporary arrangement. That arrangement was made about a year ago on an ad hoc basis. Since that time several premiers have indicated that they were not satisfied with it as carrying out the government's promise. On September 30 Premier Douglas in a radio broadcast said that the dominion-provincial conference should be reconvened "with the least possible delay". During the opening debate of the current session of the Quebec legislature Mr. Duplessis is reported to have reasserted his government's stand on provincial rights in the field of direct taxation. Finally, on September 24, 1958, Mr. Frost, in a speech in Etobicoke, renewed his campaign to secure a more equitable division of tax revenue from the federal government and to get another \$80 million annually from the direct tax field. He is reported to have concluded his remarks on this subject by saying this:

It would be a great mistake for us all—federal and provincial—not to strive for an early resolution of this most important matter.

Is the government striving for an early resolution of this most important matter? The government has ignored these representations. There is to be no conference. Instead the government, as I have just said, has announced, without consultation or conference, its decision to maintain for this year the arrangement which it made unilaterally last year without conference. The speech from the throne and the telegraph company have now become the new lines of communication with the provinces. The provinces read about this new offer in the press and they read about the new offer last year. I am not quite sure, but I believe some of them did not get the telegrams at all. What a startling improvement this is on the take-it-or-leave-it method of that federal despot, Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent who, while he was prime minister, when he or his government wished to make in the speech from the throne a reference which affected the provinces, had the courtesy to let the provinces know about it beforehand. But the government is doing something. In the speech from the throne there is a paragraph which reads as follows:

My government proposes that the entire subject of financial relations between the dominion and the provinces shall receive continued active co-operative study.

The subject is to receive, not only study but continued active co-operative study. Was there ever a better example of an adequacy

of words trying to make up for an inadequacy of action? The paragraph continues:

All provincial governments are being asked to agree to the use, for this purpose, of the machinery of the existing federal-provincial continuing committee on fiscal and economic matters—

They are going to be asked to agree that this committee should continue to do its work. That is all it amounts to. That is the new deal with the provinces. I understand a letter was sent to the provincial governments suggesting that perhaps the ministers of the provinces might exercise supervisory jurisdiction over these people, something which presumably they have been doing all along.

I think I have produced sufficient evidence, Mr. Speaker, to support our bill of indictment. All that remains now is for me to draw the bill to a conclusion and to move the amendment. I think, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, that the government will have realized by now that the honeymoon is indeed over, and the wedding trips too. Now the hard, unglamorous drudgery of housekeeping has descended on the happy party. In fact, the domestic sink is filled with dirty dishes while argument goes on as to how to clean them economically without breaking any politically.

To return to more prosaic prose, Canada, I repeat, is faced with more problems, more difficulties and more anxieties than at any time since world war II. This government has failed to face up to these anxieties, these difficulties and these problems; its own major difficulty lies in getting away from the habit of looking at everything from the narrow viewpoint of political advantage which, perhaps, accounts for so much of the confusion, delay, contradiction and uncertainty of so much of the present government's administration. Mr. Speaker, they have elevated expediency into a national policy. I will give the Prime Minister time to take all this down. I will repeat it at dictation speed. When confronted with a situation which demands action he will make a broadcast or a speech, or appoint another commission. The favoured formula, as I have already shown, is to wait for a problem to become a crisis and then, cheerfully ignoring any commitment previously taken or promise made, to deal with it by hand-out or hold-off. That is not good enough, especially at a time when wise, steady and consistent action is necessary to help us solve our national problems and realize the great destiny which lies ahead of us.

It is a time not so much for ringing declarations of freedom—we have an abundance of them, including one of the noblest of all in the United Nations charter—as for policies of government which will make freedom