

Supply—Finance

law, when the legal obligation is fully met. And if universities do not receive from the provinces the money they need, it is perhaps because provinces cannot afford to give it to them. Consequently, must we not come to the conclusion that the federal government is taxing more than it should, and ought to hand back to the provinces higher taxation powers?

Others have claimed that it was a purely technical objection. "Those gifts or grants", they say, "are unconditional. What are you worrying about?"

What have we to worry about, Mr. Chairman? Well, for one thing, the future. If universities get into the habit of receiving those grants, they will not be able to refuse them, should our government be run, for instance, by our leftist friends, and if conditions were imposed on grants to universities—grants which the Quebec province cannot accept. There is no threat from that direction at the present time, I agree; such a danger perhaps did not exist under the former government, but to overlook the dangers which may be in store for the future would be a sign of an almost unbelievable lack of foresight.

For that reason, we consider it essential to find a solution which could be acceptable to the public of Quebec. It is for that reason that the statement of the Minister of Finance is welcome. It is also for that reason that we are confident that this government will find an adequate solution. This is the situation which has been inherited. The hon. member for Laurier who, a moment ago, criticized the government, and tried to interpret the meaning given to such grants by the Minister of Finance, would do well to read again what was said in 1951 by the former prime minister, Mr. St. Laurent, when these grants were instituted.

He stated at the time that these grants were merely supplementary to provincial grants. It is clear, therefore, that the government's intention was to help education. The principle laid down thereby was extremely dangerous, but I am confident that the present government will certainly find that solution which it is sincerely looking for.

As long as I am convinced that this government is looking for this solution, I will continue to have faith in it. My confidence extends also, in this respect, to the Prime Minister, to the Minister of Finance and all other members of the cabinet.

In principle, I hold these grants to be unconstitutional, though, in practice, I have every confidence in the government. I am

[Mr. Flynn.]

convinced that, next year, it will come forward with a solution which will be approved by the province of Quebec. The province of Quebec will recognize thereby that, in the present government, there are men capable of recognizing its legitimate aspirations and of understanding why it is so convinced of its exclusive rights in respect of education.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Flynn: Certainly, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chevrier: Would the hon. member support conditional grants provided they be earmarked for research purposes or for laboratory construction, as was mentioned by a report published in the *Montreal Gazette* in September 1958?

Mr. Flynn: Mr. Chairman, I thought I had made myself clear in this regard when I said that this was not my opinion—

An hon. Member: Tell him in English.

Mr. Flynn:—but an opinion expressed by someone else. I certainly think that regular and annual subsidy grants for those purposes are unconstitutional.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, would the hon. member let me ask him a second and final question?

If the grants are gifts and are unconstitutional, as he just said, why is he voting in favour of grants to universities?

Mr. Flynn: Mr. Chairman, the fact of voting in favour of an item, or of not voting at all, or of voting against an item, can be interpreted in different ways. If some members felt that the vote requested by the opposition would create division, I believe that they could, in good faith, vote in favour of those grants, while considering them unconstitutional.

I think that we can put our trust in this government as long as it keeps trying to find a solution. This changes absolutely nothing to the opinion that one may express. You can give whatever interpretation you like to votes cast for or against those grants.

(Text):

Item agreed to.

Miscellaneous grants—

125. Canadian association of consumers, \$10,000.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I have been quiescent for some time which perhaps justifies my speaking briefly on this item and saying at short length what I intended to say