

*Dominion-Provincial Relations*

**Mr. Monteith:** Thank goodness.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** As I said yesterday, the government boasted in the speech from the throne that it was going to call a conference and meet with the provinces in the following words recorded at page 5 of *Hansard* of October 14, 1957:

—in order to discuss fiscal relations and to seek better understanding and arrangement of many aspects of our public finances.

Anybody who has read Mr. Campbell's letter can see how much better understanding has been created by this government. Anyone who reads the letters written by Mr. Douglas or the statement by Mr. Bennett can discover the same thing. Let us compare what these hon. gentlemen have said with what was said by the Premier of Ontario at the federal-provincial conference last November, and with these words I intend to conclude what I have to say.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Well, I suggest that hon. gentlemen will want to applaud even more when I finish my remarks. I propose to quote from the remarks made by honourable Leslie M. Frost, the Premier of Ontario, as recorded at page D-1 of the report of proceedings of the federal-provincial conference held in Ottawa on November 25 and 26, 1957:

Now at this moment in history, because it is a moment of history, when he is no longer chairman of this conference and when he is retiring from his leadership of his party, I would like to express my admiration for him which has been well known and which I have stated here on many other occasions.

Those remarks refer to the right hon. gentleman who is now sitting in front of me. I continue:

Of course, like the Prime Minister of Quebec—

I use the word "premier", sir—

—I have disagreed with him in regard to matters of policy but I have never disagreed with him as a personality and as a great Canadian.

I remind hon. gentlemen that these are the words of the premier of Ontario. I continue:

As I say I would like today again to voice my appreciation for his ability as chairman of several conferences and meetings and my thanks for the infinite patience he has invariably shown, for his unflinching courtesy which I think sprang from Mr. St. Laurent himself and from the fact that he is, basically, a Canadian gentleman and comes from that great race, two of the attributes of which are courtesy and understanding. To him, I express appreciation for his broad and understanding views, and my personal hope is that he will have health and happiness and further usefulness in this great country which he has served so well.

What a contrast, Mr. Chairman!

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Lesage:** What a contrast!

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Mr. Chairman, I feel that I owe an apology to the committee for rising at this time because I take it that the speech we have just listened to was intended to be the speech to end all speeches. That magnificent gesture which I cannot possibly imitate with which the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate concluded his oratorical outburst we were supposed to have regarded, I think, as inspired awe and moreover, because of the long political career of the hon. gentleman, everything he said was supposed to be accurate. I rise merely for the purpose of pointing out one singular inaccuracy.

You will remember that the former minister of citizenship and immigration undertook to say that the 1946 dominion-provincial conference was scuttled—he chose to use that unpleasant word "scuttled"—by George Drew.

**Mr. Sinclair:** Ex-formula.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** I was personally present at the time that conference ended and I have always remembered the closing scene but happily I am not going to have to rely on my memory because I have in my hand the record of the proceedings of that conference. I would like to read what happened and ask hon. members who were present to compare that with the easy free-wheeling statement made by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate to the effect that George Drew scuttled the dominion-provincial conference on reconstruction of 1946.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** You ask Mr. Garson.

**Mr. Macdonnell:** Before reading from the record I would ask hon. members to bear in mind that the then prime minister, Mr. King, was in the chair. I am reading from page 244 of the proceedings, the last page of the record. Mr. Ilsley has been speaking and toward the end of his speech he says:

—my suggestion is that we should adjourn *sine die*, and that the government take into consideration the points of view that have been expressed here today, and then arrive at a decision as to the procedure to follow and the position to take.

The record then shows the following remarks to have been made by Mr. Macdonald the premier of Nova Scotia:

**Mr. Macdonald:** Mr. Chairman, I take it that Mr. Ilsley is not suggesting that there will not be another conference. The premier of Quebec who is not here said he would come back at any time. I would hope that the representatives of the dominion government here stand in the same position, and are prepared to try it.

The Chairman: —