

Appendix

Correspondence between the Prime Minister and Premiers of the provinces with respect to constitutional conference, January, 1950, and proposed dominion-provincial relations conference

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
Canada

Ottawa, January 27, 1950

(The following is the text of a letter sent to all provincial premiers.)

My dear Premier:

I have now received replies from the premiers of all the provinces to my letter of December 7, in which I proposed that a conference should be held early in the autumn of this year to discuss general questions of common concern to the provincial and the federal governments. The replies, as well as the discussion of this matter at the constitutional conference of January 10-12, indicate general agreement on the desirability of having the conference at a convenient date in September or October.

While the precise date for the conference can, I think, be left for determination somewhat later, it might be desirable to endeavour to draw up immediately a tentative agenda in order that the necessary preparations may be carried forward by the respective governments. Several of the premiers indicated in their letters a desire that this should be done in ample time to allow full consideration of all the subjects for discussion. In order that such an agenda may be prepared it will be helpful if I can have your suggestions as to the matters which you think should be placed on it. When suggestions have been received from all the premiers, I shall have the tentative agenda circulated for comment and revision. In this manner I hope it may be possible to get agreement on the principal items for the conference in ample time for adequate preparations.

Yours sincerely,

Louis S. St. Laurent

PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

Office of the Premier

St. John's, December 28, 1949

Right Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent, K.C., M.P.,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa.

Dear Prime Minister:

Your letter of December 7, with regard to the holding of a dominion-provincial conference in the fall of 1950, reached my office just after I left for Ottawa. I read about the proposed conference while I was in Ottawa.

We think the idea is a splendid one, and we will be very happy to attend and to co-operate.

With best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

J. R. Smallwood

THE PREMIER

Nova Scotia

Halifax, January 7, 1950

My dear Prime Minister:

In reply to your letter of December 7, I may say that I doubt if it is possible to prepare any agenda for the conference which is to be held on January

10. As I see it, there is only one matter before the conference, and that is the evolution of a method of amending the constitution. While there will be different views as to what the method should be, there still remains only one fundamental question before the conference.

In reply to the latter part of your letter, I may say that a conference in September or October, 1950, between the representatives of the dominion and the representatives of the provinces should be useful, and representatives of this province would be prepared to attend. I think definitely that the question of financial arrangements between the dominion and the provinces should be discussed at that time or earlier.

Yours sincerely,

A. L. Macdonald

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Canada.

PREMIER'S OFFICE

Prince Edward Island

Charlottetown, January 17, 1950

Right Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Ottawa, Canada.

Dear Mr. St. Laurent:

With reference to your letter of December 7, which I had not acknowledged, the first two paragraphs do not now require an answer inasmuch as the constitutional conference is concluded.

The third paragraph, however, seems to call for a promise to attend a general conference of the premiers in the early autumn of this year. I cannot determine whether or not you will discuss a new tax agreement at that conference, but in any case our province will be represented as usual.

Yours sincerely,

J. Walter Jones

THE PREMIER

New Brunswick

Fredericton, December 13, 1949

Right Hon. Louis S. St. Laurent
Prime Minister of Canada
Ottawa, Canada

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I received in due course your letter of December 7. With regard to the coming conference to discuss constitutional matters, now set to open in Ottawa on January 10, the views advanced by you with respect to the procedure to be adopted thereat are fully noted. For the reasons given one can readily see the difficulty that would arise in attempting to define an agenda, there being only one subject for discussion at the conference, namely, a possible method or plan of making amendments in Canada to the constitution in respect to matters of concern both to federal and provincial authorities.