

Let us speak in more concrete terms. What is this formula?

(a) Drafting and application of treaties:

For some time, the Federal Government has undertaken to consult the provinces about different aspects of the drafting and application of treaties. This permits the interests of the federal and provincial governments to be reconciled, and results from the wishes expressed by the provinces concerning treaties where the subject matter relates to their internal legislative competence.

Consultation can take different forms. It implies direct discussion between federal and provincial authorities. This can start before or during the negotiation of a treaty if its execution requires federal-provincial co-operation.

A variety of measures, such as the "umbrella agreement", have been taken or considered by the Federal Government to validate agreements of interest to the provinces at the international level.

(b) Participation in international organizations and conferences:

A certain number of international organizations have been created with activities relating to questions which are partly within the internal competence of the provinces, particularly since the end of the war. All these organizations have one objective in common: drafting international conventions at general conferences. It is, therefore, important to have close consultation with the provinces to facilitate ratification and implementation of these conventions by Canada. As a result, federal authorities have frequently consulted the provincial authorities in recent years on the content of such conventions and the possibility of carrying them out.

One of the most practical ways of carrying out this policy of co-operation is to strengthen provincial participation in the delegations which Canada sends to international conferences when the activity is of particular interest to the provinces. That is what we have done, for example, in the case of UNESCO, where provincial ministers of education have been invited to participate in general conferences and senior provincial civil servants have been included in Canadian delegations. This system is perfectly adequate for promoting provincial interests, provided, of course, it is used. This presupposes that the provinces will not make a desperate effort to dissociate themselves from the Canadian presence abroad, as if it were dishonorable to be a Canadian or ineffective to put forward the interests of all of us with a single voice.

(c) Foreign aid:

Foreign aid is an integral part of Canadian foreign policy, and the Federal Government must assume responsibility for co-ordinating it. On the other hand, in view of the fields where Canadian foreign aid is concentrated, it is obvious that the effectiveness of the programs depends in part on the co-operation of the provinces, whether federal or provincial programs are involved.