

The Budget—Mr. Schumacher

whereas other areas may have perhaps a passing or temporary veto or no veto at all.

So far as I am concerned, the Victoria conference has indicated that the provinces have really atrophied, that the process of centralization in Canada has continued far too long and that we now find most of the provinces in a position where they cannot say what really should be done for or by their people. We find areas of the country such as Atlantic Canada in which those with authority seem to feel they cannot say "boo" for fear they will lose some money from the federal government. They are under real economic blackmail or domination.

I suggest that the Premier of Newfoundland probably is certifiable and has no right to be speaking for the people of his province. We find that the Premier of Nova Scotia is a grandstander who makes noise just for the sake of making noise and is not seriously interested in his province. We find that the Premier of New Brunswick is primarily looking for hand-outs from Ottawa and is willing to do anything Ottawa suggests so long as he receives a dollar here and there, and is not really thinking of the future welfare of his people. The province of Prince Edward Island does not say anything. We find that the province of Quebec is represented by a Premier who is totally swayed by the Prime Minister of this country. I had hoped for great things from the Premier of Quebec in assisting to protect provincial rights in this country. We find, however, that during the conference he appeared to be in agony.

I think it is interesting to note the type of things which go on in this country. We find that Marine Industries Limited gets millions upon millions of dollars from the government of Canada to build ships for France. That company is closely related to the Premier of Quebec. Here we have an example of federal tax money taken from people all over the country being used to influence the Premier of that province. I hope that between now and June 28 the people of Quebec can bring some pressure to bear on that man so he will buck himself up to the point where he will speak up on behalf of the people of his province.

Then we find that the great province of Ontario is led by a group of fat cats. There is no other way to describe them. They will have some answering to do to their people in the long run, because the only impression that could be gathered of the Ontario delegation was that it was composed of people who were very smug and really did not give a thought to what was going on because they believe that in the long run they will be able to control this government. They have not been concerned enough about the problem of the division of power.

I believe there was mention in the newspaper I referred to earlier that the Premier believes there is a great deal in this conference for the province of Ontario. I suppose he believes there is, but I do not think he went to the conference properly prepared. I do not think the proper staff work was done by any of the provinces represented at the conference. Moving westward, we have the province of Manitoba which I suppose is most sympathetically inclined toward the ultimate aims and ambitions of the present government of Canada, but the

representatives of that province did not have very much to say. They did not make any contribution, and the Premier left early.

Then we have the province of Saskatchewan. The Premier of that province did not even attend the conference; instead he sent as his representative the Attorney general who is looking for an appointment as a federal court judge. He, of course, would not say anything to the federal government. The province of Alberta has a tired, old administration which is stumbling toward defeat.

● (5:50 p.m.)

I may as well tell the facts as they are. The Premier of Alberta appeared only to be concerned about language rights and as soon as some concession was obtained on language rights he shut up and would not say a word. Then we find the province of B.C. led by what I consider to be the brightest Premier there, but he is still a great egotist. He obtained a few things, he says. He will be consulted on the appointment of Supreme Court judges with an unofficial promise of a judge from B.C. He thought it was a great victory and was willing to sell-out for that.

All I can suggest is that we have quite a few small-minded Premiers at the head of provincial governments in Canada and they are completely under the domination of the federal government. Who does the work? The federal government goes there with a delegation of 20 or so, whereas each province has only four, five or six officials. Who does all the drafting? It is all done by the secretariat under the domination of the federal government. This is not confederation. It is a great abuse of the principle of federalism.

I hope that between now and June 28 everybody will not be mesmerized. I see Ontario has jumped to the bait as early as it could, being the first to go along with it. I hope that the province of Quebec will be instrumental in rallying the rest of the provinces to what should be the proper role of the provinces in this country, because if we go along the road toward centralism, the way we have been going, and have this confirmed in a new Constitution I am fearful about the future of this country.

Mr. D. Gordon Blair (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, the budget debate is for all of us an opportunity not only to speak on the budget but to speak on matters of general concern to our constituents. In the few minutes remaining I propose to make some comments about an important matter affecting not only my constituency but all parts of Canada. It was a matter of great regret to me that the study of the bilingual policy of the government undertaken by the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates did not result in an assessment of that policy and a report to this House on its operation. I regard this as unfortunate.

I raise this matter not in order to inflame feelings or to cause difficulties where difficulties do not exist, but rather because it is a serious problem which will not be solved by people overlooking it. We cannot be like ostriches with our heads in the sand believing that the problem is not serious. The problem of which I speak has

[Mr. Schumacher.]