

The Address—Mr. Garson

Mr. Garson: Now, if the hon. member will just contain himself.

Mr. Graydon: Mr. Speaker is up.

Mr. Speaker: I do not like to interrupt the minister, but he has exhausted his time.

Mr. Garson: I hope there may be some deductions for the interruptions.

An hon. Member: You had five minutes extra before.

Mr. Garson: I think it is only fair to refer to, and to place on the record, the hon. member's own explanation as to how he arrived at the conclusion that the right hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. Mackenzie King) had scuttled the conference. This is what he placed on the record the other day when he spoke:

I was sitting in the gallery and had watched the little whispering campaign between the then prime minister and Mr. Ilsley. I do not think I am wrong when I say that the prime minister scuttled the conference.

Well, Mr. Speaker, a person sees two men whispering, and concludes that one of them scuttled the conference. But why pick on Mr. Mackenzie King? Why not Mr. Ilsley?

Mr. Ross (Souris): I heard what he said.

Mr. Garson: Or why not both of them? I suppose it is to settle deep problems of this sort that the electors of Souris sent the hon. member here to represent them. And he settles this deep problem of ethical guilt after listening to this whispering campaign by a procedure of eeny, meeny, miny, mo—and picking the Prime Minister as the man who scuttled the conference.

I suggest that not all the letters the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) wrote to the Prime Minister before the conference started, nor the ones he has written since; nor the motions he moved, for adjournment or otherwise; nor the pious ejaculations that he has offered; nor his sanctimonious wishes for the success of the conference; nor his protestations about being a good Canadian, cover up these plain facts that an agreement is impossible if any province demands what the province of Ontario demanded in this particular case.

Mr. Merriitt: You have a surplus of \$600 million.

Mr. Garson: I should like, in conclusion, to call two witnesses in corroboration.

Mr. Jackman: Collaborationists?

Mr. Garson: I said corroboration, not collaboration. We were not collaborationists; but we have corroboration.

[Mr. Ross (Souris).]

The first of these is Professor J. A. Maxwell of Clark university in the United States, an outstanding authority on dominion-provincial fiscal relations. At page 15 of his paper on recent developments in dominion-provincial fiscal relations in Canada, he says:

On April 29, 1946, the conference re-assembled at Ottawa to consider revised proposals. After reviewing the two major concessions which the dominion government had made up to that time,—

Professor Maxwell goes on to say—

—it was then apparent that the key to agreement was in the hands of Ontario and Quebec. Except for minor qualifications, the seven other provinces would accept the revised proposals. The attitude of Quebec was enigmatic although the generalizations of Premier Duplessis were such as to connote the impossibility of agreement . . . Premier Drew was more specific in his demands for Ontario . . . A rough reckoning indicated that acceptance of the Ontario proposals would add at least \$134 million a year, possibly \$234 million, beyond what the federal government had set as its maximum concession.

And listen to this:

On this rock the conference foundered on May 3. So large a difference, after negotiations extending over nine months, seemed impossible to bridge.

My next witness is Mr. K. J. Binns, economist to the government of Tasmania.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Drew: Far enough away from home this time.

Mr. Garson: My hon. friend says he thinks that is far enough away from home, if I heard him correctly. Well, it is far enough away from home to produce a man who would certainly be divorced from partisan bias in matters concerning this country. And may I say this, that the state of Tasmania is so hopelessly—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: What do you know about it?

Mr. Garson: —biased in favour of state rights, which would correspond to our provincial rights, that they elect one party in the provincial sphere, and elect the representatives of another party to the federal sphere, so that the state partisans may go to the federal government and watch that the federal government of that country does not injure their state rights.

Mr. Merriitt: A good idea.

Mr. Ross (Souris): You did not have to go that far away to find that out.

Mr. Garson: I did not realize I was such a humorist. Mr. Binns came here from half way across the world for no purpose other than to make a complete study of what we had done in this country to settle this difficult problem, one which is also a difficult problem