

*Dominion-Provincial Conference*

the attitude toward our constitution and constitutional arrangements which called for a flexibility in the constitution and in the constitutional arrangements. Our policies called for a readiness on the part of Ottawa and on the part of the provincial governments to enter into different arrangements and different agreements with Quebec, in particular, if this is necessary in order to make progress and, indeed, with other provinces if the situation makes that kind of solution desirable.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we do not withdraw from that position. I realize that some members of my party, in the last election and at other times, have expressed themselves in terms that go beyond those I have just stated. We have differences of opinion in our party, as the Prime Minister has in his and as the Leader of the Opposition has in his, and it is as true for a party as for a country that a party that has no differences of opinion is dead and that if it has no internal conflict it is dying. But we do not retreat as a party from the position we have put to the Canadian people, the position that if you insist that in every case every province must be treated in exactly the same way the result may well be immobility for Canada. The result may well be in certain instances an impossibility for the country to go forward.

If you have nine provinces willing to enter into a joint plan with Ottawa and one province which for good reasons does not wish to do so, we say that in that situation it would be to immobilize Canada to refuse to make the kind of flexible arrangement which that situation would require. I remind the house that this is what we did with the Canada Pension Plan. We have a Canada Pension Plan and we have a Quebec pension plan. Every Canadian is covered by a pension plan and no one in Canada is hurt. Unless we had been prepared to make that kind of arrangement no Canadian would have been covered by a pension plan, which certainly would have been a thoroughly undesirable result.

I want to go to another point which has been mentioned neither in the paper which the federal government tabled nor in any of the remarks of the premiers at the conference that ended last Wednesday. Without entering into an ideological controversy, I think it is recognized that in a modern society it is impossible to run things without a great deal of just, viable and conscientious planning by all levels of government. It is impossible to run Canada if only the federal government plans its affairs, and if every provincial government plans its affairs without relationship

[Mr. Lewis.]

to the plans of the other levels of government.

I suggest that one of the urgent needs in the new constitution is for us to establish, right in the document, consultative and planning machinery that would take in all 11 governments in Canada. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, it is impossible for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) to carry through a meaningful fiscal policy in this country when half of the revenues are collected and half of the total expenditures are made by the provincial governments and the municipal governments across Canada. It is impossible for the governor of the Bank of Canada to have a useful monetary policy with the support of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) if every level of government, without relationship one to the other, is able to go to the market as it pleases, when it pleases and without knowing what the total effect on the monetary policy is or may be at any given time.

• (2:30 p.m.)

I think the next step forward as a federation interested in serving our people is a constitutional provision for permanent machinery for consultation and planning in respect of the economy and services to our country. On occasion, agreement will not be reached and I appreciate that. The constitution will have to make provision for the results of possible disagreements, but very often—I hope most often—agreement would be reached and every section of Canada would therefore fit into a national plan, with national purposes and national objectives.

Our party is determined that Canada should be a nation which speaks to the world in two official languages but with only one voice. We support the position that the constitution must guarantee this indispensable character of the country in the community of nations. But to say that, I suggest, is not enough. Our new constitution will also have to provide a viable solution to the real problem in respect of the part which provincial governments may play in areas of international concern which fall within their provincial jurisdictions. It is not enough merely to insist that Canada must have a voice somewhere.

If the organization deals with matters concerning labour, as the I.L.O. does, or matters concerning education, urban renewal, housing and the like—matters which are either exclusively at the moment, and may continue to