

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements

a provincial field of legislation. Education belongs to the provinces, not to the federal government.

Ottawa has invaded those fields because one day the provinces yielded their taxation powers at the request of the federal government in 1942 and it has kept them ever since. It pretended back-tracking but kept on invading and that is just what we are opposing: we do not want one system but ten. The province can look after its patients. Each province knows its needs; it is that kind of thing that Quebec is fighting for and it is justified to do so to keep its field of jurisdiction.

We will have a confederation when provinces have their autonomy and can live; it is somewhat like in a family. If the municipal council rules everything in the family, what is going to happen? What is going to happen is what is now happening in the provinces, because the government interferes too much in provincial business. That is all. All cards are mixed up. We surely have to . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Chambly (Mr. Loiselle) again on a point of order.

Mr. Loiselle (Chambly): Mr. Speaker, will the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) allow me another question?

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, of course, the hon. member for Chambly may ask me another question.

Mr. Loiselle (Chambly): Can the hon. member for Roberval explain how federal shared-cost programs—if he knows at all the terms under which the federal government, as he says, expects the provinces to operate—downgrade the autonomy of the ten Canadian provinces?

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, what an odd question! How do you downgrade someone's rights when you encroach on his land? You just walk right into his house and then ask: How am I undermining your authority? Why, you should not be that ridiculous! We know that today it is more expensive to have two collectors instead of one. Besides, the minister proved it the other day in the House when he said that when the federal government collects in Quebec or in other provinces, it gives them one-fifth of the amount collected. That's all, it is clear! We cannot afford to pay four-fifths to a collector. In our fields—I am still speaking about our provincial jurisdictions—if the provinces interfered with matters under the federal jurisdiction, I would be the first to tell them to beat it. But when the federal government interferes, for instance, with matters under the provincial jurisdiction, saying that it is much better and will be less costly for them, what is to be said? That's it, when they need a collector, they will pay four of them and pretend it is better this way. Collectors are not what we need, we must try to keep our credit and our money as well as administration powers in our provinces, our regions, and in matters which come under provincial jurisdiction.

We will have peace, but why all these fights in Canada? There have been fights since the federal government has interfered with provincial matters. As far as I know, it goes

[Mr. Gauthier (Roberval).]

back to that time, to the "great invasion." Everything had to be centralized here in Ottawa. All taxation powers had to be kept here in Ottawa to redistribute revenues later on to the provinces, as if they were too stupid to meet their own citizens' needs. That's it! Take for instance the field of education: post-secondary education is all very fine; I will say a few words about it: I deal a lot with that matter in my constituency. But it is ridiculous! You should know how much is spent for nothing in this area, and we do not know where to go. Financing is secured by the federal government, but the teachers are hired by the provincial government. There are courses in there that are not worth a nickel but that is paid by the federal government. The federal government's money must be used. But come on, if the percentage of taxation powers necessary to administer the whole province was there. Do not forget that Quebec is paying for those courses. They are given by Quebec teachers paid by the federal government. Why is that? If it were given its taxation rights would Quebec not have the means to pay its teachers just as well as the federal government? We know that when the federal government gets \$5 from Quebec it gives \$1 back. Come on, those teachers cost a lot in the end.

That is why I say a common effort will have to be made concerning the remittance of taxes. It is all very nice for the minister to start by returning 13.5 per cent. He should have returned 40 per cent. He would have been left alone, and all the premiers would have gone back happy. But no, he is again going to give them an amount of money, \$5.5 billion with \$3 billion worth of tax points. It is a small gain but the provinces must earn all the points. It is funny to hear me say that, because I am a federalist. But I want everyone to work in his area, and then we are going to have peace. As I said earlier, if the mayor of a city should try to tell the father of a family what to eat, how to dress and how to act in his home he is going to get thrown out. It is the same thing for the provinces.

Quebec is being shouted at today, and people find it extravagant and unfair but it is only asking for what belongs to it. It never asked a single thing of what belongs to the federal government. Never. That is all it is asking, as well as the other provinces. I sat the other day with the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. It is the same thing for them. They are clapping hands and very happy. They said, that is the autonomy we have been asking for for years to be able to serve our people—the necessary taxation power to give them equivalent services. That is not asking for the moon, and that is all they are asking for. Not only Quebec, but all the other provinces ask for this! But why do we insist, and this is where I do not understand the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald), why do we still keep the taxation powers for ourselves? Why? You want Canadian unity? I want Canadian unity myself, but let us act accordingly. As long as you act like you are now doing with your centralization, your dictatorship over the provinces, the provinces will revolt, and you have not finished yet! Give them back what belongs to them, this is all that they want, and take care of your own business.