

Dominion-Provincial Relations

We have the tables before us, but they are still estimates and no one can say exactly how much any province will receive in this coming fiscal year—no one can say that precisely. I have tried to make that very clear and I think I have done so. In so far as the provincial premiers are concerned, they are competent to calculate what this means to their particular province.

Mr. Nicholson: I do not want to blame the newspapers; they were merely reporting what the minister placed on *Hansard* on Saturday. Since the minister made this mistake, I think he should follow up with telegrams to the premiers, taking full responsibility for it and advising the premiers.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am not going to detain the committee very long but I have a few observations to make about the statement of the Minister of Finance this evening. As hon. members know, I have been a resident of this city and closely associated with the government of this country for 20 years.

An hon. Member: Too long. When are you going to Newfoundland?

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not know whether the Minister of Public Works is interested in getting this measure through, but I strongly suggest that he should indicate to the back-benchers that this is a debating society and not an athletic arena.

It is almost 22 years since this process, of which this is perhaps the most unhappy chapter, began. It began with Mr. Skelton and Professor Deutsch, in their association with the Bank of Canada, going to Winnipeg at the request of the government of Manitoba in January of 1937.

Mr. Harkness: If this is a lecture in history, better be sure of your dates.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think perhaps the hon. gentleman will find I am more accurate in my dates than he is in his bills. I will not have to revise them as often.

Mr. Harkness: You have never given any indication of accuracy here. We would like to see a practical example.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Pickersgill: I will proceed to be as brief as possible and I am very grateful for the excellent co-operation I am receiving from this side of the house.

An hon. Member: They are all asleep.

Mr. Pickersgill: At the time this process began, the second stage of which was the appointment of the Rowell-Sirois commission, the third stage of which was the wartime tax

agreements and the fourth stage the conference of 1945-46 which the then premier of Ontario scuttled. He was for a long time the leader of the Conservative party. Then came the tax rental agreements which for the first time—

Mr. Harkness: You departed from history some time ago and now you are into mythology.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I rise on a point of order. Should the Minister of Agriculture not have regard to, and be guided by, the rules of this house which say that when a person wishes to speak he should rise from his seat?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill: The next stage in this process was the equalization phase introduced into this parliament by my right hon. friend from Quebec East and by the former minister of finance.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pickersgill: And for the first time in the history of this country we had equalization which applied right across the board to every province—

An hon. Member: Except the maritimes.

Mr. Pickersgill: I hope my right hon. friend will not object to my saying this, but I have not forgotten what he said when the Quebec provincial income tax was imposed. He said he did not see how we could be unfair to the people of any province merely because some of the members of their government were unreasonable. The former minister of finance, Mr. Harris, did a very courageous thing when he introduced this equalization proposal and he got very little appreciation for it in the province which he represented in this parliament. I want to go beyond what my right hon. friend has said and say that it is a real gratification to every one on this side of the house to see that this miserable pittance which the Minister of Finance gives Mr. Frost, instead of the \$100 million for which he asked, with the minister's leader listening to Mr. Frost's request, and hearing him say "There is the man who is going to give it to us"—that is the appeal that was made all over Ontario, and I have a lot of extracts—

Mr. Sinclair: That is true.

Mr. Pickersgill: This 20 cents on the dollar which is now being paid by the Minister of Finance is paid exactly in accordance with the formula of Mr. Harris, the former minister of finance, and we are proud of it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.