

*Interim Supply*

The premiers are dissatisfied. Even Mr. Lesage publicly expressed his discontent as a few months ago, he had asked for an amount of \$150 million. Therefore, I said that the provinces just obtained a few scraps.

What is going to happen now, Mr. Chairman? School taxes will be constantly rising in all provinces, and more particularly in the province of Quebec.

Indeed, we recently read in the papers that the Quebec farmers had threatened to refuse to pay the government taxes which were increasing at a terrific rate.

Mr. Chairman, I admit that the federal government has powers of its own, but the provinces also need more money in order to meet their requirements.

I feel that Mr. Lesage was inconsistent when he publicly denied having used the word ultimatum. This fact was proved actually on a television program, as evidenced by the following report published in *La Presse* of Friday, November 29, 1963:

Lesage actually termed his requests as an "ultimatum". During the program "Aujourd'hui" on channel 2 yesterday, was shown part of a press conference held last April in Quebec city which proves beyond doubt that Premier Jean Lesage actually termed as an "ultimatum" his fiscal requests for greater taxation fields.

Mr. Chairman, I think that when Mr. Lesage used the word "ultimatum" during an electoral campaign, he did so without knowing which government would be elected. But now he wants to back out. He cannot use the same word, because his friends are here in Ottawa.

If Mr. Lesage really wants to keep the promise made to the people of the province of Quebec, I feel that he should take some positive action to provide for the needs of his province and proceed as he said he would, namely to establish double taxation.

Even the Quebec premier is dissatisfied with the treatment received from Ottawa. In fact, I am surprised by his stupid attitude when he asks the Quebec people to vote for the present government at the next election when he knows that this same government refuses to accede to his requests and to surrender to his ultimatum, because he did use that word.

And what happened to the related questions? We asked some questions about the transfer of New Quebec Eskimo affairs to the province of Quebec, about joint programs and lotteries. It would seem that nothing, absolutely nothing has been solved. All these problems have been postponed for further studies. I feel that the federal government is not entitled to rejoice, when confronted with the fiasco of our last federal-provincial conference. All the premiers are dissatisfied with the prevailing situation.

As I said a moment ago, it is a pity that the President of the Privy Council is not here at

[Mr. Pigeon.]

the moment; he could have told us about his plans for the future, and commented upon the reactions of the various premiers after the conference.

Mr. Chairman, before concluding, may I be allowed to say that I sincerely hope that our next federal-provincial conference will meet with more success, and will answer more fully the wishes of the provincial premiers; I am inclined to doubt it, after the last fiasco. To my mind, the premier of the province of Quebec has not carried out his promises to the people of Quebec, and has gone back on his own positions.

**Mr. Deschatelets:** Your party is quite used to fiascos, and it can chalk up quite a few of them.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Chairman, if the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Deschatelets) wishes to take the floor, I will be glad to let him do so. I would be happy to hear this minister from Quebec tell if he feels that the decisions taken by the federal-provincial conference are really satisfactory.

He could tell me what he thinks of Mr. Lesage, his ultimatum and his retreat?

When Mr. Lesage says the federal government should think in terms of human resources rather than in terms of guns and cannons, I would like to know whether the Minister of Public Works shares his views. I am giving him right now an opportunity to let us know.

**Mr. Deschatelets:** Mr. Chairman, I just have to say one word which will summarize my whole thought. The time for speeches ended in April last, the present government is one of action.

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Chairman, when the minister says the time for speeches ended—

**The Chairman:** Order. I think the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm yielded the floor to the Minister of Public Works.

**Mr. Pigeon:** It was simply to give the minister a chance to make a short speech during this session.

**The Chairman:** The hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm yielded the floor to the minister, who joined in the debate. I do not believe the hon. member can say: "I gave the minister an opportunity for making a short speech, and as it was very brief, I shall resume."

**Mr. Pigeon:** I wonder if the house would unanimously allow me to conclude my remarks.