

*Interim Supply*

sacrifices; we pooled our resources in a confederation, one principal purpose of which was to bring about some sharing of the wealth of the whole land, some equitable division of the benefits of the whole country. The great force for equalization must be the central government, which is supported by all the people and which is the only source of leadership for all the people.

We live in a world when many other countries are looking to supranational associations; we talk about the world of the super state. We will be terribly out of tune if we in 1964 should move in the other direction toward decentralization and the exalting of the parts to the disadvantage of the whole. This is a fundamental matter, Mr. Chairman. We can only get strong national leadership if we have strong national leaders; and they can be strong only if they have strong institutions in which to operate.

It is one of the great misfortunes of our day—perhaps one could use a stronger word than “misfortunes”—that at a time when the dominion structure is buffeted more than ever before, when we need a strong government more than ever before, we have an administration noted for its appalling weakness. We find that from the dominion-provincial conferences the provinces always emerge the victors. Sometimes one wonders if those who represent the dominion conceive themselves as mere arbiters between principals, diplomatically negotiating differences; or whether they conceive themselves as the spokesmen, the principals in the negotiations for the senior level of government, for the government whose actions affect the lives of every single Canadian.

The dangers are numerous and widespread; the loss of revenues has been tremendous. We now see that while provincial areas of jurisdiction remain sacrosanct, dominion areas are being opened, great financial resources are being moved back to the provinces. Can one imagine what funds in ten years time, if the pension plan goes through, will be available—not to the dominion but to the provinces? We see the situation arise where the dominion government is becoming the mere collector, the agent collecting moneys from the people for the benefit of the provinces. Can we, out of this, develop a stronger country? Will we get, out of this, a common purpose? Will we overcome our differences and difficulties, if we have no common rallying point? And where else could that be but at the national level, in the national capital,

[Mr. Macquarrie.]

and from those charged with national responsibility to lead the whole country?

No one is suggesting, and it would be idiotic to suggest, that the provinces do not have legitimate needs and legitimate areas of operation; but we are living in an age where I submit the dominion authorities presently incumbent are engaging upon a course which is dismantling the dominion structure which they should be upholding. Many things have been charged to this government. They have made many mistakes; in fact, the multiplicity of their mistakes is not something new. Perhaps in this regard they are fortunate, because these mistakes come so often that no one gets really aroused about them for very long. But there is a big difference between the administrative blunders, bureaucratic flubs, alterations and changes which have characterized the government up to now, and the egregious error such as I am convinced they are making in not seeing the importance of sustaining the national institutions. It is their responsibility so to do. They can hardly expect those who operate on the provincial scene to do it for them; they can hardly expect the newspapers to do it for them; they can hardly expect the opposition to do it for them.

I would say that up to now they have been very fortunate in the assistance they have received from certain sources. I would say that if the present premier of Ontario were the kind of man that some of his predecessors were, Mr. Hepburn or Mr. Mowat, the fabric of confederation would not only be sagging, but it would be completely rent and dragging in the ground of a loose association of ten practically autonomous but terribly unequal states. Premier Robarts—and he has had other colleagues in this respect—has taken, albeit while a provincial premier and the spokesman of a province, a stand that shows a realization of the necessity of keeping this country strong and keeping it united. I think we can be very thankful that in Canada's most populous and largest province we have a man who, as the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* said the other day, “didn't make a show of strength but had strength enough to show restraint”.

I have noticed that Premier Robarts has been very concerned about what is going on and he is going to give leadership in this field; because he realizes that the people of Ontario are also people of Canada. While we all have provincial loyalties—and I come from a province where sentimentality is deep; we love our homeland—Canadians, I maintain,