

Supply—Finance

The same blackmail continues today. The provinces have no alternative but to submit to the dictates of the Prime Minister or to be starved out. The only freedom that is left to them is the freedom to starve or to live prostrate at the feet of the federal ogre. "Being the lion entitles me to the biggest share," says the Prime Minister. Let the others share what is left.

With the exception of the maritime provinces, whose economy is on the downgrade because of the neglect and carelessness of this government, there are no more poor provinces in Canada, and it is a falsehood, a lie, to say that the purpose of tax agreements is to achieve a better distribution of the national wealth.

Are New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island better off since Ottawa took them under its wing?

What is wanted, what bureaucrats are seeking, the purpose they want to achieve, is the monolithic state; it is to make Ottawa the financial, economic, political, intellectual and cultural navel of all Canada.

The trouble with these centralizers and the obstacle which prevents them from reaching their full goal is that the province of Quebec, and their great enemy Duplessis, whom they would like to subdue and force into line with the others under a single command, are standing in their way.

Upstanding French Canadians are firm in their resolve to remain what they always have been, citizens proud of their origins and their heroic past. They are a real hindrance to those dreamers who would like to cast the whole Canadian population in the same mould.

I contend that the Union Nationale, since it has been in power, has made marvels for everyone to see and verify; I contend too that the consistent success of premier Duplessis at the polls can largely be explained by his achievements in the field of education at all levels, primary, secondary and university.

I wish to quote from page 276 of the brief submitted to the royal commission on constitutional problems by the Fédération des collèges classiques:

Every system of grants contains at least the germs of a subordination of the beneficiary toward the givers; this is inconsistent with the equality of right which must exist between the federal and the provincial governments.

I take pleasure here in congratulating the distinguished dean of Laval University, Mgr Alphonse-Marie Parent who said that his university would refuse federal grants.

[Mr. Gagnon.]

Commenting this statement in an editorial, *Le Soleil*, mouthpiece of the Liberal party, said on December 21, 1956:

Such a decision could easily be expected since it is consistent with the traditions of that institution, the first French university in Canada which, for more than a century, has been the guardian of French civilization on Canadian soil.

In spite of its limited financial resources, the university could not betray those who have waged political battles, who have won the constitutional liberties which we enjoy today and among the greatest of which is that exclusive jurisdiction granted to the provinces in matters of education, a privilege which the present government, as did all its predecessors, is jealously defending against any attempt of encroachment.

The surpluses of the central government, at a time when municipalities are faced with deficits, and some provinces are in financial difficulties, is nothing less than scandalous and unfair.

These surpluses are made possible by the central government's fiscal centralization and by its consistent encroachments upon the sources of revenue of the provinces.

It is rich with the money of others. Its favours, its liberalities and its gifts are paid for by taxes drawn off the provinces and particularly the province of Quebec.

Here is an abstract from the Tremblay commission's report:

Our surveys lead us to the conclusion that, for refusing to compromise on the rights granted to her by the constitution, the province of Quebec, through the policy followed by the federal government particularly since 1947, has sustained losses which may be assessed at more than \$300 million.

French Canadians, Mr. Chairman, are too proud to be the servants of the central government; their glass is small but it is the glass in which they wish to drink, and begging is not much to their liking. They have too much backbone. We don't want charity, we want justice. This is why I say that the central government should return to Quebec the amount of which the province was deprived because she refused to sell her sacred and inalienable rights, because she is not willing to trade for gold the history, traditions, customs and privileges which her sons conquered in America at the price of heroic fighting and sometimes with their own blood.

Politicians of all political trends have fought and battled, not once but a hundred thousand times, to preserve for their descendants the catholic and cultural inheritance handed down by their forefathers. They spared nothing to make us what we are today. We may neither betray our past nor deprive our children and grandchildren of the merits and of the victories won by our forebears.

He who . . .