

DOMINION-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

Prime Minister Diefenbaker reported to the House of Commons, November 27 on the Dominion-Provincial Conference which was held November 25-26 at Ottawa.

In his statement in the House, the Prime Minister said in part:

"...The agreed communiqué of the conference indicates that sufficient progress was made on certain items to permit action to be taken on them. In particular, the Government is proposing to bring before Parliament at this session an amendment to the Unemployment Assistance Act to remove the so-called threshold provision, under which the Dominion treasury makes no contribution toward the cost of the eligible cases upon relief roles until they exceed .45 per cent of the provincial population. A suitable measure will be drafted and placed before the House in due course to carry out this policy, which should make it easier for a number of the provinces to make suitable arrangements to assist their municipalities in carrying this burden of assistance to persons in need. It is proposed to make this change effective at the beginning of 1958.

"In my statement to the conference I said that the present government was inclined to recommend to Parliament a change in the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act to remove the clause providing that the payments to provinces under that act shall commence only when six provinces, containing at least half the population of Canada, have entered into agreements under it and have their own related acts in force. In place of that we would substitute a more definite date for commencement of the plan.

"We found no provinces expressing any

strong views against this change, and consequently I would now like to announce our intention of proceeding with it when opportunity offers. Consideration will have to be given as to what particular time will be selected and as to whether other changes in the legislation will be desirable.

"I am sure all members of the House will welcome the announcement in the communiqué that:

'It was generally agreed that the over-all economic position of the Atlantic Provinces is now such as to justify some special grants in aid to the Governments of those provinces from the Federal Government.'

"This is the most important immediate result of our meeting this week. The Dominion Government will now proceed to consider in detail what it should propose in order to implement this general policy.

"The conference was invited to review the present tax sharing arrangements, and possible changes suggested by some of the provinces in the Tax Sharing Arrangements Act were discussed. As I made clear in my opening statement, the Dominion Government did not put forward any suggestions in this field, and it was understood that no endeavour would be made to reach definite conclusions on it at the meeting this week. Further consideration will be given by the Government to this general subject in the light of the statements made during the public sessions by the provincial premiers, and also the subsequent discussion that took place in committee...

"A subsequent meeting as soon as possible in the new year will be held in accordance with the proposals made by this Government in calling the conference."

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NEW MANUFACTURING RECORDS

Canada's manufacturing industries broke earlier records in 1956 in the factory value of shipments, number of employees, salaries and wages, and expenditures on materials and supplies, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics annual preliminary report on manufactures. Factory value of shipments rose 12 per cent to \$21,849,415,000 from \$19,513,933,000, number of employees to 1,364,163 from 1,298,461, salaries and wages to \$4,600,943,000 from \$4,142,409,000, and material costs to \$11,698,222,000 from \$10,338,202,000.

Value of shipments of the leading 10 manufacturing groups was as follows: foods and beverages, \$3,884,905,000 (\$2,614,315,000 in 1955); iron and steel products, \$2,755,338,000 (\$2,242,717,000); transportation equipment, \$2,211,023,000 (\$1,950,410,000); paper products \$1,918,576,000 (\$1,754,098,000); non-ferrous metal products, \$1,859,551,000 (\$1,626,982,000); wood products, \$1,477,949,000 (\$1,375,-

343,000); products of petroleum and coal, \$1,477,000,000 (\$1,160,823,000); chemicals and allied products, \$1,112,595,000 (\$1,044,089,000); electrical apparatus and supplies, \$1,056,655,000 (\$962,614,000); and textiles, \$769,184,000 (\$734,515,000).

Ontario accounted for almost one-half the national value of shipments in 1956, totalling \$10,653,912,000 versus \$9,617,642,000 in the preceding year, followed by Quebec with \$6,736,353,000 versus \$5,922,365,000, and British Columbia with \$1,904,844,000 versus \$1,679,000.

Estimated shipment values for the other provinces were as follows in order of value size: Alberta, \$701,768,000 (\$641,148,000 in 1955); Manitoba, \$676,660,000 (\$588,351,000); Nova Scotia, \$395,700,000 (\$331,129,000); New Brunswick, \$323,931,000 (\$294,829,000); Saskatchewan, \$301,033,000 (\$295,162,000); Newfoundland, \$123,780,000 (\$115,579,000); Prince Edward Island, \$25,814,000 (\$23,628,000); and the Yukon and Northwest Territories, \$5,620,000 (\$4,751,000).