

provincial leaders left quite satisfied, because after his failure with the provincial finance ministers he had to appeal to the premiers. Here again the premiers kept their proceedings open at the beginning, but then had to meet behind closed doors as they do each year and discuss. I am told that discussions were sometimes rather heated, that there was the odd skirmish, but nothing else can be said because it took place in camera. Strangely enough, the country's problems are always solved in camera. The storm over, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) comes in the House and says: All is well. Everyone was singing. And yet the echoes coming from the province of Quebec are quite different. Quebec newspapers report that the Quebec finance minister, the premier and their colleagues are not altogether satisfied with the arrangements.

Obviously, they had to accept at last the small share they were offered, so they said, because once more we really do not know what happened and we may never know, as for the 40 other federal-provincial meetings. It is always a game of hide and seek for parliamentarians. All they say in Quebec is that Quebec is not at all satisfied.

I heard someone say a moment ago that the richer provinces will be the beneficiaries. Of course they will, because they are the ones that pay more. They are also the ones from which more is withheld. When Quebec spokesmen request tax powers in areas under their jurisdiction I believe they are right in making such claims, even though the minister says that finally an agreement has been signed and \$8.5 billion have been definitely returned to the provinces. The breakdown of these \$8 billion is as follows: transfers in the amount of \$5.5 billion, tax points in the amount of \$3 billion, that is 13½ per cent of tax points.

● (1530)

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that if the government had wanted to be honest, to be fair, it would simply have returned to the provinces those 8 billion in fiscal points, because they relate precisely to three provincial jurisdictions: health care, hospital care and education. The federal government enters the field of education with both feet through post-secondary education, and then it says education comes under federal jurisdiction. That is not true, education belongs to the provinces under the British North America Act. The health field also belongs to the provinces, and here comes the federal government, saying it has been tolerant toward the provinces, it has been good, it has been a good father because it gave them, after long disputes, 13 and a half fiscal points.

I am sure that is not what Quebec wanted. What it wanted was at least 38 or 39 per cent in fiscal points, and not the charities made to the provinces. That is what I call those fixed amounts, charities. If we really want to restore Confederation, if we really want to get the provinces to have more frank and open discussions, let us give them back their rights and they will come and discuss according to their rights. For the moment, we are simply giving them crumbs of their rights and keeping the lion's share for ourselves before later redistributing it at our discretion.

#### *Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements*

Many will say that some provinces are happy with that. Of course! Some provinces get a lot of money out of equalization programs because the federal government says we must deal with regional disparities and we all know that some provinces expect to get more from the federal government. But why should we sap the power and resources of the provinces only to try to even out the benefits among all the provinces? Mr. Speaker, would it not be wiser to let the provinces do themselves justice rather than play referee between all the provinces? That is where the government is going wrong.

**Mr. Bernard Loiselle (Chambly):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Chambly (Mr. Loiselle) on a point of order.

**Mr. Loiselle (Chambly):** Would the hon. member be prepared to answer a question?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Would the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) be prepared to hear the question of the hon. member for Chambly?

**Mr. Gauthier (Roberval):** He can always ask it.

**Mr. Loiselle (Chambly):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether the hon. member for Roberval is in favour of the 10 different systems of hospital insurance and of a different social program in each of the provinces of Canada or whether he believes in national unity and thinks that there should be similar systems throughout the country? This is my last question: could he tell the House whether he really knows the requirements set by Ottawa to enable a province to take part in the cost-sharing program?

**Mr. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased about this question. The hon. member is asking whether I am in favour of the 10 different hospital insurance systems? Am I right?

**Mr. Loiselle (Chambly):** Yes, you are.

**Mr. Gauthier (Roberval):** Of course, I am for 10 systems; I am clearly opposed to the establishment of 11 different systems. The area of health must be under provincial responsibility. We now have 11 different systems but we do not have 11 provinces, only 10. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of eliminating duplication at the department and civil servant levels because it costs twice as much to Canada.

● (1540)

The administration of provinces is reflected in the federal government and people wonder why it costs so much, why budgets are so big. But of course budgets are big because with its taxation power the federal government has invaded all provincial fields to get the money. It creeps into all those fields, so it gets all the money. Health belongs to hospital administration which comes under provincial jurisdiction: it is