

Supply—Labour

Mr. Brassard (Lapointe): Mr. Chairman, in his long-winded speech, the hon. member for Roberval has misrepresented the statement made by the hon. member for Levis (Mr. Bourget) concerning joint programs.

If I understood him well, he stated that the hon. member for Levis had favoured doing away with the system of joint programs. Now, what my hon. friend from Levis said—the hon. member for Roberval knows French well enough to have understood—was that the next Liberal government would allow any province that wishes to do so to withdraw from joint programs without losing any advantage in the process.

Mr. Chairman, before I resume my seat, I should like to point out to the hon. member for Roberval and to all his colleagues from Quebec, who have expressed their views most vaguely, that we still do not know where they stand. Do they take the stand of the leader of Quebec's Union Nationale party or that of the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Diefenbaker)?

Mr. Tremblay: Mr. Chairman, I would not take any notice of what the hon. member for Lapointe has just said, but since he suggested that I had not expressed my opinion on the matter we are now discussing, I am compelled to put the record straight. The statement he made is false. I did say this: that there was no need to come to a decision at this stage, since we have already expressed our views on this matter. In so doing, I endorsed the statements made by the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys (Mr. Flynn).

On the other hand, I put a very precise question to the hon. members of the opposition. I asked them to what extent they were repudiating the past stand of their party on joint schemes—

Mr. Deschatelets: He just told you.

Mr. Tremblay:—and according to what principle they were repudiating their past and exactly how they can reconcile their present stand with the one they adopted in the past when they were themselves the sponsors of those joint schemes.

I wish to put once more on record this statement of the hon. member for Laurier, formerly from another province—

An hon. Member: So what?

Mr. Tremblay:—which I quote from the *Nouveau Journal* of October 17, 1961:

Hon. Lionel Chevrier stated last night that the Liberals in Ottawa were in favour of the progressive abolition, as requested by Mr. Lesage, of the joint federal-provincial programs such as old age assistance and disability pensions.

I am quoting that statement merely in order to address again to the members opposite the question which I asked them, and I would add this. As far as joint programs are concerned, do we find, as is the case for the "patronage" of their friend Mr. Lesage, some programs which are good and some which are bad? What are their principles and how can these gentlemen repudiate their past? I ask them to explain that to us.

(Text):

Mr. Pickersgill: I would not have risen to take any part in this discussion at all, Mr. Chairman, had it not been for the very important declaration of principle which, if I understood him correctly, the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys made on behalf of the government today. I wish to be sure that I understand him correctly. I therefore wish to repeat what I understood him to say and to underline it so that we shall know where the government stands.

Last evening my hon. friend for Levis set out the position of the Liberal party with respect to the joint programs, and he challenged a member of the government to set out the position of the Conservative party and the position of the government which has the responsibility. After all, as long as we are in opposition all we can do is put forward a program which we will carry out when we come back into office. However, hon. gentlemen have the responsibility for carrying out these programs right now.

Today I understood the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys to say something that has never been said before, to my knowledge, by any member of this administration. I understood the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys to say that it was the policy of the government that if any provincial government approached them and indicated it did not wish to participate in one of these programs, they would consider giving that government compensation. If he did not say that, I wish he would tell me what he did say and I will allow him to interrupt me right now.

Mr. Flynn: When the hon. member reads *Hansard* I think he will find that is not what I said. I said that whenever a province objected to a joint program because it felt that it violated its autonomy or was beyond its legal capacity, we have shown in the past in connection with the university grants that we were prepared to adjust or to adopt a form of compensation. This is the attitude that I think this government has taken, and this is the interpretation that should be given to the attitude of this government, not that