

*Interim Supply*

which provides complete, exhaustive and continuing examination of the problems that fall within the jurisdictions of its different governments.

That is what we have contended for. It is agreed that there should be improvement with regard to close and continuing consultation. Then it deals with shared cost programs. Why, only a few weeks ago, these were about to end. Whatever provinces wanted to end shared cost programs, they would end; but now they come out with this.

The conference therefore agreed on the particular need for a continuing review of fiscal arrangements and shared cost programs and the relation between them. It was agreed that these matters would be the subject of joint study by officials, in preparation for another session of the federal-provincial conference in the early part of the new year.

With regard to altered equalization payments the communique says:

These changes are intended to take effect in the next fiscal year. The provinces stated their views on this proposal.

They did not agree to them, as the Prime Minister admitted today. Then the communique deals with a federal lottery and proposals for legislation to permit the Canada-wide operation of agricultural marketing boards. There was general agreement in connection with pension increases for old age assistance and blindness and disability allowances. Then it ends up with a word on Indian and Eskimo affairs, on which there was general agreement on the objectives of policies designed to achieve closer association with the life of other Canadians. Finally, the communique ends with these words:

The conference ended with the expression by the heads of all delegations of their determination to work in co-operation for the strength and welfare of Canada and its provinces.

They could have written 99 per cent of the communique before they started. This conference was promoted as another example of the Pearson plan. We have had the plan drawn in a broad panorama today, but when the opportunity came to place that plan for the future of confederation before the representatives of the provinces, the government ended up with this small and, compared with the increases we gave to the provinces, insignificant increase of \$87 million distributed in the manner set out by the Prime Minister.

Sir, they have learned one lesson, that they must consult, and that is to the good. Beyond that we will have to wait until March to ascertain what deal, if any, has been made. In the months of April to November Mr. Lesage was breathing brimstone, but at the meeting the ultimatums suddenly evaporated and in place of what he was going to achieve, this comparatively insignificant result is attained.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

No matter what eloquent or grandiloquent words the Prime Minister has used, what was achieved was a denial of the undertakings of the Liberal party and of its pledged word in connection with equalization grants. Then they ended up with the sop on succession duties so that they would be able to say, "Well, we have taken the first step in the direction of the demands that were made on April 5 by Mr. Lesage." They call that agreement among the provinces, but the provinces could do no other than say, "That is what we are going to get. We will now return home and there will be further consultations. Possibly next April the government will have a plan to place before the provinces for consultation."

**Mr. Gregoire:** Mr. Chairman, I have listened with great attention to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. It reminds me very much of the type of speech that the Prime Minister himself used to make when he was in opposition. I only regret that the Leader of the Opposition did not make the same statements a year ago, because then we might have had some results. I have listened to him telling us about everything they were supposed to have done, but when we look at the results, after five years of the Conservative party being in power, we see that they were very poor.

I also listened to the speech made by the Prime Minister this afternoon. Since becoming a member of this house I have always found that he can make fine speeches with nice sentences and good words, but they are only words. As he himself said, he arrived at the inauguration of the federal-provincial conference with no solution. He went there and listened, and then he claimed he produced some solutions.

[*Translation*]

I have here, Mr. Chairman, a few remarks made by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) at the opening of the federal-provincial conference:

It is my hope that the well-defined policy which the federal government and the provincial governments need in matters of common interest will take shape during this conference. Such a policy will result from our discussions rather than from statements made as suggestions to give our talks a start.

And in his speech this afternoon, the Prime Minister of Canada said:

We could not come with a final answer to that problem in a conference which lasted four or five days.

But with regard to this matter, the Prime Minister might be blamed for failing to acquaint himself, before the conference, with the requests and suggestions of the provincial