

*Dominion-Provincial Relations*

the solutions that were offered on either side but that, as a result of discussion, as a result of consultation with one another, these representatives of the three senior levels of government would be able, in terms of justifiable compromise, to work out arrangements in their common interests,—and it is the common interest that we must bear in mind; not the interest of this government but the common interest—namely the interest of the federal government, the interest of the provincial governments and the interest of all of the people of Canada. That is the type of responsibility devolving on a government in respect of this matter.

I therefore say to the Minister of Finance, reminding him again of Kennedy's law of the constitution, that by sending a telegram to the provincial governments and saying to them, "Here is our policy; here is what we are going to do for the time being", without giving them an opportunity of direct comment, without treating them as equals in the matter of intergovernmental relationships in Canada, he resorted to a technique which I trust will never be repeated by any succeeding government in Canada. How does this method fit in with the suggestion of the Prime Minister that, if elected, he would sit down with the provinces and work out a policy in complete co-operation and good will? Is that the way in which to encourage co-operation? Is that the way in which to encourage good will? Is it in keeping with the objective of maintaining satisfactory dominion-provincial relationships to call the provinces together to a conference of two days, to give them an opportunity of stating their case in an unrestricted way and at that conference not stating what the federal government's position was but leaving, after an interval of some six weeks or seven weeks, the opportunity to the federal government to say unilaterally without being face to face with the provinces, "Here is what we propose to do?"

If my hon. friend does not recognize the validity of what I am saying, then I have a feeling that in the short time in which he has been Minister of Finance he has not learned how to conduct satisfactorily the relations between the federal government on the one hand and provincial governments on the other. He may say in reply, "Oh, well, on one occasion when the right hon. gentleman sitting to your right was prime minister, he wrote to the provinces and said, 'Here is our policy'". That is true. My friend will find that on the record, I think, on January 6, 1956. The then prime minister of this country communicated with the provinces and he said, "Here is our fiscal proposal". But let us compare that action with the conduct and

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

the action of this particular government in this particular case. Before the then prime minister wrote that letter of January 6, 1956, he had had several conferences bilaterally with some of the provincial premiers. He had seen them all in this very room. At least on two occasions prior to that time provincial officials had met with their opposite numbers in the federal public service. The significant thing is this, however. Not only had there been these antecedent negotiations, but after the then prime minister had written and said, "Here is our policy", he gave the provinces the opportunity of discussing that policy in Ottawa with him and with his colleagues.

**Mr. Fleming:** Mr. Chairman, surely the hon. member is nearly finished with his speech, but I must ask you to invite the hon. member to come back to the clause under discussion. The matter on which he is roaming about now has nothing whatever to do with the function of the committee, the house having determined that it approved the principle of this bill.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I want to say to you, Mr. Chairman, with great confidence—

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** On the point of order, Mr. Chairman, may I ask you to take note of what was said on May 16, 1956, as recorded at page 3992 of *Hansard*, by the then private member for Vancouver-Quadra and the then private member for Eglinton—

**Mr. Sinclair:** What is his name?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):**—who are now respectively the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Finance. We were on clause 1 of a bill which happened to have to do with housing. Mr. Winters questioned whether or not the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra should be allowed the latitude he was taking. I quote from *Hansard* as follows:

Mr. Green: Mr. Chairman, the minister raised this particular point, I think, more frequently than any other minister in the cabinet. He must know that it has been the rule here that on the first clause of a bill the discussion has not been limited solely to that clause. That is a right which the opposition cherishes—

The opposition in those days, of course, consisted of the Conservatives.

—and which in the long run means that legislation gets through much more quickly, because if that were not the case it would mean more extended debate on the other clauses.

There were some further remarks, Mr. Chairman. The chairman of the committee of that day made a qualified ruling—one of those half-and-half rulings—that really allowed the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra to go on but suggested that he not