

CONFIDENTIAL

August 8, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROBERTSON

c.c. Mr. Carter
Mr. Bélec
Mr. Neville
Mr. Gwyn
Mr. Hurley

Patriation of the Constitution and
Provincial First Ministers Conference
August 21 - 22, 1975

Harold Millican from Alberta phoned me this morning (Friday, August 8). He indicated that Mr. Lougheed had asked him for a situation report on the progress of discussions respecting patriation of the constitution. Millican reported that Mr. Lougheed's request stemmed from the following proposed agenda item for the Provincial First Ministers Conference:

"Future of Federal and Provincial Responsibilities:

- (a) patriation of the constitution;
- (b) distribution of powers and cost sharing;
- (c) control of resources."

I provided Millican with a brief and general outline of the present situation as I understand it from the file and your discussion with Mr. Blakeney yesterday. That seemed to satisfy him for the moment. However, he wondered whether you might prepare something to send to all Premiers which would aid them in their discussion of the patriation question. Another possibility raised was that you might go to the Conference to provide information.

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*Spoke to
Millican on the
telephone
8/11/75*

I explained that you had not yet seen Premier Barrett and, therefore, it might be premature for you to prepare a paper to send to the Provincial First Ministers, especially for multilateral discussion by them. Millican said he appreciated that, but in case you did wish to go to the Conference he could 'arrange' an invitation. I didn't encourage him at all in this direction but said I would bring the matter to your attention.

I mentioned to Harold that I had heard that one item at the August 21-22 meeting was to be discussed in-camera. He seems surprised, saying he didn't know what it was. More interesting, however, was his comment that it had been proposed last year that federal observers not be invited to Premiers' conferences. (You will probably recall that we were, in fact, cut back from 3 to 2 observers for the meeting in Toronto last summer.) He said there was some surprise (on whose part he didn't say) that Newfoundland, as host province, had not raised this question with the other provinces this year. My response was merely to note that we would be disappointed if we were excluded because I thought the Premiers' discussions at the conference provided an excellent way for them to communicate, indirectly but very frankly, to the federal government current concerns about federal-provincial matters.



W.L. Haney