

June 16, 1980

PROVINCIAL ATTITUDES\*

General mood immediately following June 9 Meeting

Five of the premiers indicated that, as a result of Monday's meeting, they were optimistic about the possibility of progress in the upcoming talks. (B.C., Sask., Ont., N.B., Nfld.) Four premiers said that they sense a change in mood and a general will to make rapid progress. (B.C., Sask., Ont., Nfld.) Mr. Peckford specifically indicated that he senses a positive change in mood on the part of the federal government.

Alberta and Quebec indicated they are not optimistic and stated that there is no visible change in the federal mood.

Manitoba has evinced neither optimism nor pessimism, but only reiterated its strong opposition to a entrenched charter of rights. P.E.I. has also displayed wariness on this issue.

Four provinces said they are prepared to bargain one item for another. (B.C., Sask., N.S., Nfld.)

Alberta and Quebec again say that they are not prepared to bargain in this way.

Comments expressed later in the week

At least four premiers have stated that they do not consider September 12 as a final deadline for agreement on all the issues on the current list.

The reaction of the provinces to the suggestion that Parliament might move unilaterally in constitutional reform has, with one exception (Ont.), been very strong and very negative. Some of the adjectives used include "destructive", "catastrophic", "irresponsible". Premier Blakeney did not take the suggestion seriously, saying that it would greatly disrupt the pace of the discussions; Premier Peckford expressed surprise explaining that he did not consider September 12 a deadline; and Premier Hatfield said that the federal government has no right to be "cavalierly pessimistic".

Premier Lougheed has made it clear that he is not prepared to move on constitutional reform until an oil pricing agreement has been reached and he has rejected the most recent federal offer.

\* as indicated through the media since June 9.