

Supply—Northern Affairs

Woods. That province has no statutory responsibility in respect of the regulation of Rainy lake.

The total expenditures on the investigation of damage claims, lake of the Woods, are as follows: for Manitoba, \$1,547; for Ontario, \$4,370; for the Canadian government, \$2,230, making a total of \$8,147. Apportionment of the payment according to the agreement of November 15, 1952, is as follows: the Canadian government, one-third; Ontario, approximately one-ninth; and Manitoba approximately five-ninths.

Mr. Macdonnell: Would the minister add a word of explanation to the remark he made a moment ago, which interested me. He said the department was carrying out studies with a view to bringing down the cost of living in the north. Could he give just one or two indications as to nature of those studies?

Mr. Lesage: One of the main factors in the high cost of living in the north is the cost of transportation, and of course the cost of hydroelectric power which is higher than elsewhere. The cost of transportation affects the price of every commodity.

Mr. Macdonnell: I thought it might be that.

Mr. Hodgson: Does the dominion or the province control the water in the lake of the Woods?

Mr. Lesage: It is a tripartite agreement between Canada and the provinces of Ontario and Manitoba. There is a statute covering the subject, and a board has been created under the statute.

Mr. Hodgson: Who controls the administration? Who lifts the stoplog out of the dam, and who puts it in?

Mr. Lesage: The board.

Mr. Hodgson: The dominion government?

Mr. Lesage: No, the board.

Mr. Hodgson: The board that is set up by the three governments?

Mr. Lesage: Yes, that is right.

Mr. Fraser (Peterborough): I just want to say to the minister: If he can bring down the cost of living in the north, what are the chances of bringing it down in the rest of the country?

Mr. Lesage: I shall sit on a special committee with the hon. member, whenever he wishes, and we will discuss that.

Mr. Churchill: I should like to ask the minister for a word of explanation concerning the international executive of the world power

[Mr. Lesage.]

conference. What is the world power conference? What is its purpose, and by whom are we represented?

Mr. Lesage: This amount is provided annually, and has been for many years, to take care of Canada's share of maintaining a small permanent headquarters in London, England. It also provides for Canada's share of printing the conference report. The contribution is £100. This executive council studies the world power situation, and makes a report which is useful to our division. We participate in this conference, at which there is a complete exchange of information about the power situation in the various countries throughout the world.

Mr. Churchill: Have we a representative on the executive council?

Mr. Lesage: There is a national committee in Canada of this world power conference. It is made up of representatives of this department and representatives of industry. This national committee sends a representative to the world power conference when it meets.

Item agreed to.

Water resources division—

314. To provide for studies and surveys of the Columbia river watershed in Canada, \$377,400.

Mr. Herridge: This item is of great interest to my constituents and, I know, to the people of British Columbia generally. I see the vote is \$4,100 greater than last year. As I understand it, Mr. Chairman, this will be the tenth year that these investigations have been undertaken. I should like the minister to inform the house as to the total cost of the investigations to date, including this estimate. What is being undertaken by the investigation this year, and how long is it expected it will take to complete the investigation of the Columbia watershed area? If the minister can give some information, I would appreciate it.

Mr. Lesage: The expenditure since 1944-45 has been \$2.4 million, excluding the proposed estimate for this year. Now, it is believed that it will take two years to conclude the investigations. After this year's program we expect that the investigation as a whole with respect to field activities will be 85 per cent complete, and the office studies necessary for the compilation of the report will take another two years.

Mr. Herridge: That means four years in all?

Mr. Lesage: The expectation is five years in all.

Mr. Herridge: Another five years before the report is completed?